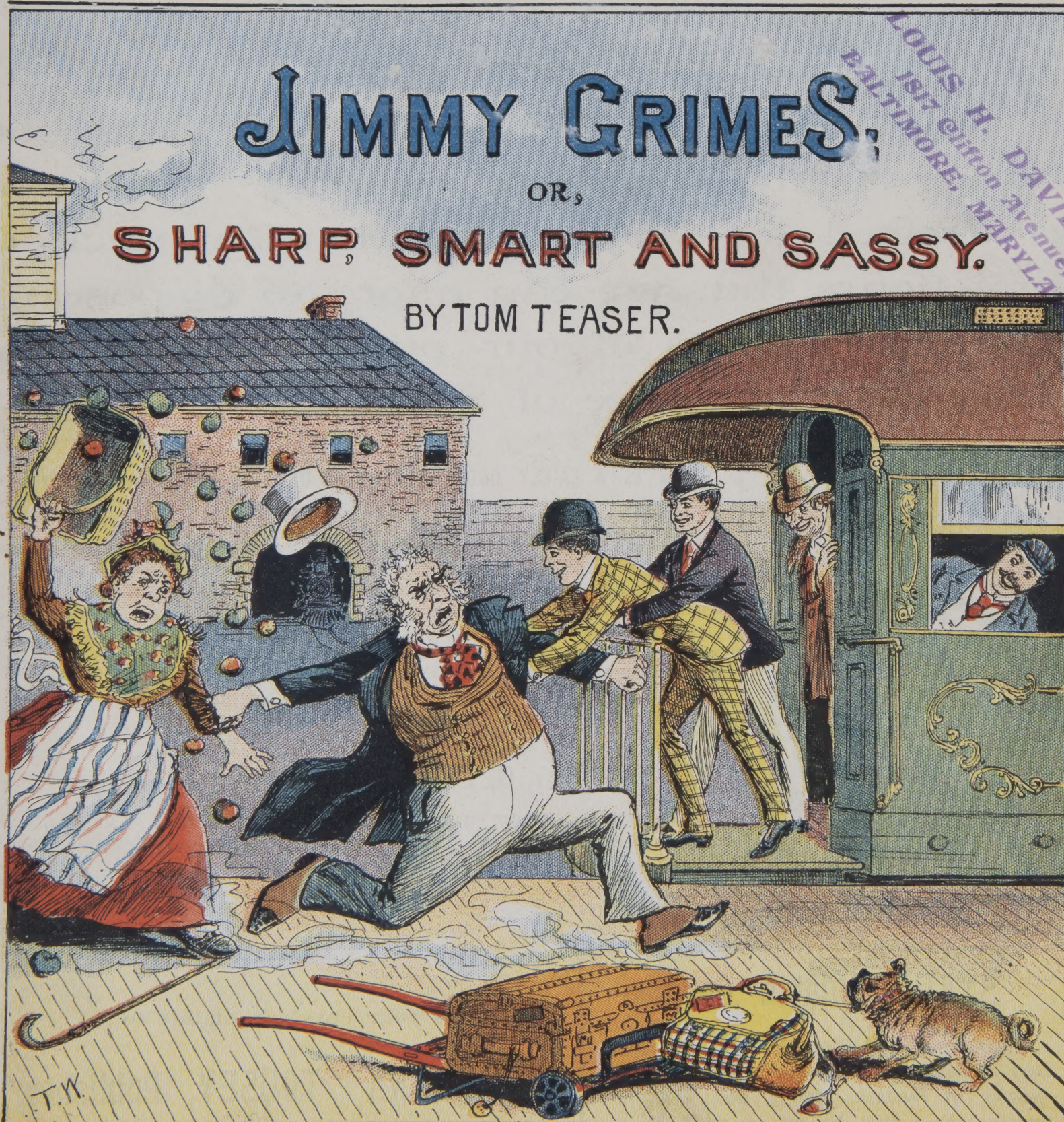


Issued Weekly—By Subscription \$2.50 per year. Entered as Second Class Matter at New York Post Office by Frank Tousey.

No. 61.

NEW YORK, DECEMBER 5, 1900.

Price 5 Cents.



At the end of the platform was an Irish woman, with the usual basket of cast-iron fruit. The old gent grabbed her, and dragged her along, the apples from her basket flying into the air as she went.

A Good Watch for One Dollar

A STEM WINDER AND STEM SETTER.

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Address your envelope plainly to . . .

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❖ SNAPS ❖

A Comic Weekly of Comic Stories by Comic Authors.

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No. 61.

NEW YORK, December 5, 1900.

Price 5 Cents.

JIMMY GRIMES;

OR,

SHARP, SMART AND SASSY.

LOUIS H. DAVIDSON,
1817 Clifton Avenue,
BALTIMORE, MARYLAND.

By TOM TEASER.

PART I.

"Jimmy Grimes!"
"You're right, Bob!"
"Where did you come from?"
"School."
"Got a vacation?"
"Rather!"
"For how long?"
"Fifty or sixty years."
"Graduated?"
"Next thing to it."
"Kicked out?"
"You bet."

The first speaker in the above dialogue was a good-looking country lad of nineteen who stood on the platform of the railroad depot at Turnover, a quiet little New England village.

The other was a rather slim, stylishly dressed boy of about the same age, with light hair, blue eyes, sharp, handsome face, and a general air of cheek and grit sticking out all over him.

The first was Bob Hoyt, the second our hero, Jimmy Grimes, both well known in the "Deacon's Son."

"Going to foot it home?" asked Bob, after a few moments' conversation.

"As there don't appear to be any gilded barouche in waiting, I reckon I will," said Jimmy.

"But what will the deacon say about your bounce out?"

"Be mad, probably."

"And then?"

"He will get over it. You know he thinks lots of me. I'll give him a little judicious taffy, and he'll believe that I'm a deeply-injured angel, and the military academy folks a set of ferocious barbarians, who ought to be hung."

"You'll do it," said Bob.

Bob was right.

At first the deacon was mad to see his adopted son arrive home expelled, but Jimmy's artful tongue soon broke up his anger.

"But what do you expect to do now?" he asked, that evening after supper.

"Go to work," cheerfully answered Jimmy.

"What at?"

"You've got me there, dad."

"How would you like to stay to home and run the farm for me?"

"Nixey, Jim. Get up at five and go to bed at seven. Plow all day with a pair of cast-iron oxen, or dig potatoes with the sun artistically roasting my back Japanese colors. No, thanks, dad."

No farming in mine. I'd rather be a circus performer and swallow the tame giraffe, 'evenings at eight, Saturday matinees at two.'

The upshot of the conversation was that the deacon decided to take Jimmy to New York and look out for a place.

Bob was to accompany them.

He, too, was desirous of embarking into the business world.

So in a few days a train brought them swiftly into New York.

They put up at the St. Nicholas, and after supper took a stroll along Broadway.

Presently Jimmy complained of a headache.

"I must have a plain soda," he said, leading the way into a brilliantly lighted bar-room.

Bob and the deacon followed.

"What will you have, gentlemen?" asked the barkeeper, producing three glasses with a professional flourish.

"Plain soda," said Jimmy.

"Milk punch," ordered Bob.

"I think I shall have a—a whisky sour for my kidneys," said the deacon. "Whisky sours are good for kidney complaints, are they not, barkeeper?"

"Best thing in the world, sir," replied that worthy, without a smile.

The drinks were soon disposed of. In the centre of the room stood a pillar from which two handles protruded.

Above was a figured dial.

Above this was the request: "Try your weight."

Now, the whole arrangement was a trick to entice the unwary, for attached to the machine was a powerful galvanic battery.

By pressing a knob the electricity was forced into the two handles, and whoever had hold of them could not let go until the electric current was removed.

In other words they simply received a shock from a galvanic battery.

Jimmy had seen the snare before, but the deacon had not.

"Is it a weighing machine?" asked he.

"Yes. First patent at the Paris Baby-show," replied Jimmy.

"Let's see how much you weigh, dad."

"How does it work?"

"You take hold of the handles."

"Yes."

"Pull them down."

"Yes."

"And the result is registered onto the pie-plate above. A big brain invented the snap."

"Have I got to take my feet off of the floor?"

"Of course. Hang right onto the handles."

The deacon took off his coat.

All the idlers in the saloon had gradually edged up.

Most of them were on the broad grin.

"What are those darned fools laughing at?" asked the deacon.

"Most of them were born so—don't mind them," replied Jimmy.

"Do you think you weigh over two hundred?"

"Sure."

"Then you get a prize."

"What for?"

"Everybody that weighs over two hundred gets a plate of soup and a chromo of a shirt."

The deacon spit on his hands.

He jumped up for the handles and raised himself from the ground.

Jimmy slyly pressed the knob.

In a second the deacon received a gold medal shock.

"Oh, Lord! Great hambones!" yelled he.

"What's the matter?" Jimmy asked.

"Jerusalem! I'm being killed!"

"Let go."

"I can't!"

"Spit on your hands."

"They're fast. Great Caesar! It's awful. Oh, my! Somebody smash the darned thing! Suffering Moses!"

The deacon was squirming about like a worm on a pin. His face was distorted with terror and surprise, and his body was dancing a breakdown on nothing.

"He's got a fit!"

"Jim-jams!"

"Blind staggers!"

"Cramp!"

Thus the gang about cried, apparently in deep earnest.

"Get a pail of water," advised the barkeeper, "and douse him."

As for Jimmy, he appeared deeply concerned.

"Dad, please let go!" he cried. "What does ail you?"

"Some darned fool has stuck needles in these darned handles," replied the deacon as he twitched and twirled around. "I shall die!"

"How long has he been drinking?" asked a sympathizing bystander.

"About a week," replied Jimmy, in a loud tone.

"Hard stuff?"

"Whisky straight."

"Does it always affect him this way?"

"Generally."

"Will somebody hit that little liar?" bawled the deacon. Gosh-darn it, I'll be dead in a minute!"

"Get the ice ready to put him on," laughed Jimmy.

"Let up," whispered the barkeeper, "he's had enough."

Jimmy turned off the battery.

Down came the deacon with a thump on the floor.

And out of the door shot the most of the crowd, Jimmy leading.

It was well they did so.

When the deacon came to his feet he wanted to start a riot in the place.

But the barkeeper, who was armed with six revolvers and a club, explained things at the risk of his life.

He told him of the trick, but being a solid man, excupated Jimmy and Bob.

"A feller with a gray hat did it," he said.

Out went the deacon in search of the fabulous person in the gray hat.

By the door he met his hopeful son and Bob, calmly smoking.

Ascertaining how the land lay, Jimmy kindly offered to kick the fellow with the gray hat himself, and they all started up Broadway, the deacon sulking along like a morose bull.

At the corner of the next street there was a torch brightly blazing.

A dark-skinned man, with a high hat, which looked as if it had seen the hardest sort of luck, was lustily bawling out:

"Try your weight, gemmen. Step right up all ob de gang an' get heap much weight; only five cents, prize to the best weight."

The deacon stopped.

The wind was blowing the smoke from the pine torch into his eyes, and he could hardly see the speaker.

"Weighing machine, sen'tor."

"Ah, how does it go?"

"Set down in de chair, sar!"

"Set down in a chair, you darned villain, will I, and get stuck fast again? Not much, you city pirate."

"Old man darn fool. Wipe off him chin an' take tumble," responded the other.

The deacon hit out without another word.

Over went the man on top of his weighing machine, and that not being accustomed to receiving weight that way, gracefully toppled over.

The deacon caught his foot in some part of it and he fell, too. Everything was mixed up in a mass, and the deacon and the

man clubbed each other and the weighing machine almost indiscriminately.

"What in the deuce is all this racket about?" asked Jimmy, coming up.

"The deacon's on the slug," replied Bob.

"What's up?"

"He met another weighing machine."

"Reckon the machine got the worst of it this time."

"Rather."

Just then the weighing-machine man staggered to his feet, leaving the deacon pummeling fits out of the chair.

"Me all broke out—cuss—darn—blazes! Nose heap bigger dan yesterday. Me got tomahawk, cut bad old pale-face!" he said.

"Bob," said he, "you can hit me with a sardine if it ain't—"

"Wigwams!" cried Bob.

"Just so. Where in the name of Methusaleh did that everlasting Indian spring up from?"

"Ask him."

"Guess I will brace his dusky nibs," said Jimmy. "Wigwams!"

The weighing-machine man started.

"Wha' dat?" asked he.

"Five guesses for a cent, baby mine."

"Who calls big Injun by his name?"

"Look and see, Wiggy."

In obedience the other peered eagerly into the countenances of the two laughing youths.

"Wigwams' little brudder, Jimmy Grimes!" he gasped.

"Sure."

"And de oder am Bob!"

"Keno."

Wigwams looked almost beside himself with joy. He shook hands most heartily with the boys.

"Who de old fool dat me kill?" he asked. "He heap fresh. Wigwams hit him for his mother-in-law."

"That's the deacon," said Jimmy.

"Cuss luck," groaned Wigwams, "he took dat way often? When deacon get off him nut?"

"Only a spasm of anxiety," said Jimmy, "don't believe you injured him seriously, for he's getting up again."

So it seemed.

The deacon had arisen to his feet unsubdued.

"Where is that tarnal liar—that darned jackass, with his weighing machine? I'll turn it into a coffin and put him into it!" yelled he.

"Here he is," said Jimmy.

"Hold him till I get at him and murder him."

"Me heap sorry. Cry whole head off. Beg deacon's pard'n. All hab drink," suggested Wigwams.

"Well, I'll be darned," ejaculated he, "if it ain't Wigwams."

"Every time."

"I thought you were married."

"Squaw skip. Go off with fish-man. Wigwams heap glad."

"That's a nice way to talk about your blooming and beautiful bride," said Jimmy. "Let's all come and have some oysters."

The invitation was gladly accepted.

The quartette went into an oyster saloon and took seats at one of the tables.

"Where did you get your weighing machine, anyhow, Wiggy?" Jimmy asked.

"Gen'ral Custer leabe it to me in his will. Me sabe his life."

"Come off—no taffy."

"Bought it in Bowery—sebenty cents."

"That's more likely," Jimmy said. "Well, here's seventy cents—call it square."

Meanwhile the deacon had been looking around at the various signs which decorated the walls of the restaurant.

"Soft shell crabs," met his eye.

Now, crabs are almost unknown in the deacon's village, it being inland.

"What are soft shell crabs, Jimmy?" asked he.

"Crabs with their overcoats off," Jimmy answered. "You eat shell and all."

"Truly?"

"Cross my heart. Try some; I intend paralyzing a couple."

"I guess I will."

"Two soft-shells," ordered Jimmy.

"Very sorry, sir," the waiter whispered, "but we have only one portion."

"Got any hard-shells?"

"Plenty."

"Well, give me the soft-shells, and pick me out two of the most iron-clad, India-rubber hard-shells you've got. Give them to the other party; just for a little joke, you see."

The waiter grinned and went off.

While they were waiting for his return, Wigwams got off a lot of fairy tales about his marvelous adventures since he had

left the deacon's service, which nobody pretended to believe, but it passed away the time, and so they listened.

Presently the waiter returned.

The soft crabs, nicely browned and buttered, with shells like gossamer, were placed before Jimmy, and two mail-clad crabs, with shells like brickbats, about fifty years old, were set down in front of the guileless deacon.

He looked at them suspiciously.

"They ain't like yours, Jimmy," he remarked.

"Different breeds," calmly explained Jimmy.

"How?"

"Yours is Hoboken, mine Staten Island."

"Oh! Do I eat the shells?"

"Certainly. Watch me."

Jimmy gently cut his crisp crab in half and ate part of it.

"Is it good?" the deacon queried.

"Very yum-yum. Try yours."

The deacon grasped his knife and went for his crab.

The steel made about as much impression on the crab's neck as a spit-ball would on an elephant.

"Bring me a hatchet," he gasped.

"It takes brain to manipulate them," said Jimmy, as he bent over, and by the exertion of all strength managed to dis sever the crab.

"Pitch into it, dad," he said.

The deacon took a mouthful of shell. It was as hard as a cobblestone, and tasted like a combination of glue and mud-pie.

"Ain't it bully?" Jimmy asked, with his mouth full of edible crustacea.

The deacon glanced slyly about.

Everybody was looking at him. Several others at the surrounding tables were eating soft-shell crabs with evident relish.

He did not wish to be thought green.

So he crammed down the crab, though it nearly killed him.

"Ain't it nice?" said Jimmy.

"Elegant," responded the deacon, with a suppressed swear.

"Juicy?"

"Very," assented the deacon, the tears standing in his eyes.

"So tender."

"D—evotedly tender."

"Sweet?"

"Intensely."

"So crisp."

"Crispy as darnation."

"Tackle the other one," advised Jimmy, almost ready to burst with merriment.

This was the last straw that broke the deacon's back.

He got up from that table with a bang, and pushed back his chair with a slam.

"Bring me another crab," he yelled. "They're nice, they're sweet, they're juicy. Bring me a basket full. Give me some fried bricks or some roasted tombstones for a change. Goldarn your soft-shell crabs! I'd a darned sight rather eat baked overshoes."

There was a grand explosion of laughter, and the deacon realized that he was sold again.

He picked up his cotton umbrella and stalked out of the place, half determined to find Jimmy a place in State prison.

He was all over it the next morning, though, and Jimmy and Bob started out to reply to several advertisements that they had cut out of the morning papers.

They separated, and did not meet till supper-time.

Each looked radiant.

"I've gripped the graft, Bob," said Jimmy.

"Struck a place?"

"Yes."

"What is it?"

"Life insurance agent. I'm sharp, smart and sassy enough for it."

"Let me congratulate you. I'm a lucky boy, too."

"Got a situation?"

"Yes."

"What's its name?"

"Book peddler. Here you are, a work that the babies cry for. 'History of the Revolution of Galilee,' all for one cent. Subscribed to by all the leading lunatic asylums," Bob rattled off, glibly.

Jimmy shook hands with him.

"I'm going on the road, said he.

"Which way?"

"Pennsylvania Railroad to Philadelphia, then west."

"By the jumping Joseph, Jimmy, that's just my route."

"When do you leave?"

"To-morrow afternoon."

"Me, too, Katy."

After a little chat, in which all the particulars of their projected journey were settled, the boys spent the rest of the day in sight-seeing, and went on a quiet little stroll at night.

The deacon furnished Jimmy with plenty of money for his trip,

which Jimmy promised to repay out of his salary, or commission, rather.

The next afternoon they drove down in a carriage to the ferry-house.

The deacon and Wigwams accompanied the boys through the gate.

"Going to Jersey City with us?" Jimmy asked.

"No," replied the deacon, "just to the boat."

The ferryboat was in the slip. Jimmy got on the extreme end of it, and bracing himself firmly, seized the extended hands of the deacon and Wigwams, who stood on the edge of the slip.

"Good-by, dad," he cried.

"Good-by, Jimmy."

"Good-by, Wigwams."

"Heap good-by, brudder Jimmy."

Just then the whistle blew, and the chains were loosened. The boat was about to move off.

"Remember me, dad, in your prayers," pleaded Jimmy, holding on to the hands of the pair.

"Yes; let go of me; good-by," said the deacon, for the boat was beginning to move.

"Kiss me, dad. Good-by, Wigwams," said Jimmy, perceiving that the others were losing their balance, "don't cry too much for me, dad."

"Good-by—but please let go," wailed the deacon.

"Au revoir," replied Jimmy, still clasping the hands.

"Raw revolver!" gasped Wigwams. "Let go, brudder Jimmy. Injun no want take tumble."

The boat was receding from the slip with increasing speed.

The deacon and Wigwams were being pulled off their feet.

"Ta-ta," sang out Jimmy, drawing them toward him. "Over the river!"

PART II.

The ferryboat was gliding out of the slip with Jimmy clinging tenaciously to the hands of the deacon and Wigwams.

Too late they divined his object.

"Let go!" they both screamed at almost the same minute.

Jimmy obeyed.

He released their hands.

But they were too far off of their balance.

Heels over head they went into the river with a resounding splash.

"Man overboard!" Jimmy yelled at the top of his voice, as if he was in no way responsible for the catastrophe.

"Big Injun in the drink!" shouted Bob, who had been quietly laughing at the racket.

The deacon and Wigwams disappeared beneath the water only to bob up again.

"Help!" screamed the deacon.

"T'row a rope—me no swim!" Wigwams shrieked, frantically waving his arms above his head.

"Walk," advised Jimmy.

"Take a car," added Bob.

"Hire a stage."

"Buy a cab."

"Goldarn you, Jimmy, you!" puffed the deacon, who was keeping above water by vigorous exertion, as the swash of the ferryboat sent a quart or so of water into his mouth.

"Da—da—dad, write me a letter from home," answered Jimmy. "You'll get wet if you ain't careful."

By this time a large number of persons were collected in the slip.

Two brawny ferry-hands grasped boathooks and caught the deacon and Wigwams by the slack of the pants.

They were pulled up.

Two nice-looking apparitions they made, with the water streaming from their clothes, for they had got an artistic ducking.

"Hang in the sun till you dry, dad," came Jimmy's voice from afar over the water.

"You be goldarned!" ruefully said the deacon, as he looked at himself with an expression of misery. "There's my store clothes completely ruined. I'll leave every cent of my money to some darned heathen asylum, and cut that young gallow's bird off with a cent."

"Me cut him off wid tomahawk," Wigwams said. "Brudder Jimmy heap too fresh. Him cuss jackass."

"Wigwams," said the deacon, "do you know of a good, healthy swearer?"

"Man wid brimstone tongue?"

"Yes."

"Me know Hell-fire Dick. He swear seberal heaps. Cuss roof off of house. But him not here. Him out in Arizona."

"I wish he was here," groaned the deacon, "I'd pay big for somebody to swear at that young cub. Call a cab, somebody."

Somebody did.

Wet and miserable the twain were taken to their hotel, there to make sulphuric remarks in regard to our hero for the rest of the day.

Meanwhile, Jimmy had lit a cigarette and gone forward.

A couple who leaned against the side-rail, gazing with big eyes at the surrounding shipping, particularly interested Jimmy.

They were plainly from the country. One look at their faces would have started a person in that belief. A look at their clothes would have corroborated it.

"Jewhellikins, Betsy," the man presently said, "I'm skeered about this ere pesky railroad travelin'."

"So be I, Joshua," she responded.

"It's awful risky business, Betsy."

"I know it, Joshua."

Jimmy concluded that he would take a hand in the conversation.

"You don't travel much," he said, in a friendly tone.

"No, sir," said Betsy, eagerly. "We hain't never been in the cars."

"Never in the cars?" said Jimmy, in surprise.

"No, sir. You see we live in Bath, Long Island. We have a produce farm, and we don't git away from it hardly ever. When we do, Joshua drives to New York."

Jimmy saw a chance for business.

The ferryboat was stopping for a long tow that was passing up the river.

It would probably cause a delay of fifteen or twenty minutes.

"Here goes for biz," he said to himself. "Always grip the graft, is my motto."

Assuming a pleasant, confidential tone, he remarked:

"It is very dangerous traveling on the cars."

"Reckon so," responded Joshua. "We wouldn't be going on them if an uncle out West hadn't died and left us some money."

"Yes," said Jimmy, "accidents are continually happening. Just yesterday the hind brake of the passenger car blew up and killed half a dozen."

"Du tell."

"Fact. An accident this morning, too. One of the wheels of a locomotive got entangled into the cow-catcher. Train run off the track. Sixty killed. Awful!"

"Du tell!" gasped both of his eager hearers.

"Oh, it happens every day. Saturday night the engineer of a Boston express got tight and tried to run his train over the river without a bridge. Everybody killed except the newsboy. He escaped by hiding in the smokestack."

"I wish we were tu hum, Joshua," sighed Betsy.

"Got your lives insured, of course?" said Jimmy, as a sort of feeler.

"Laws, no!"

"Your conduct is almost criminal," said Jimmy, severely.

"Hey!" gasped Joshua.

"Have you children?"

"Six."

"Young and lovely?"

"Wall, no," said Joshua, candidly, "they h'ain't. Matildy's the best lookin', but she's short of an eye."

"But they're good and virtuous."

"Young fellar, me and Betsy has spanked virtue right into those ere children."

"You love them?"

"It's nat'ral, ain't it?"

"And yet," said Jimmy, apparently to himself, "you could go off, with ten chances to one of your getting disabled and killed, and yet never provide for those poor children."

"How provide?" said Joshua, getting interested.

"I," said Jimmy, with a flourish, "am the only accredited agent for the Eastern States and Bulgaria, of the George Washington Life Insurance Company. Rates low. Premiums promptly paid. Nobody that ever died insured in this company has ever complained. If you fade away under our auspices we buy you a coffin, furnish a good obituary, and send our unemployed clerks around to your funeral to weep. Delays are dangerous, grab the chance at once; take out a ten thousand dollar policy right here. Just recollect, if you are killed, your children will roll in gold to the amount of ten thousand dollars for the rest of their lives."

Jimmy perceived that his eloquence had made a decided impression.

The pair stared at one another.

"Your last chance," said Jimmy, "for the sake of the lovely Matilda who is short of one eye, take out a policy."

"How much?" asked Joshua.

"Fifty dollars," replied Jimmy, at a venture, for he had not studied up the rates yet.

"Can't you drop it some?"

"That's hard pan."

"Wall," said Joshua, encouraged by an approving nod from his wife, "I'll do it. Make out the documents, young feller."

Jimmy had some blank policies in his pocket.

He whipped them out.

Then from a secret pocket he produced a self-inking pen.

In a few minutes the policies were made out, the fifty dollars transferred, and Jimmy was happy.

"If I die or Betsy dies the young folks get the money?" anxiously asked Joshua.

"Yes, sir, they gobble the gilt. Now you can go railroading with perfect impunity."

"Is it good on street cars?"

"Yes, good on anything."

By this time Jersey City was reached.

Jimmy had calculated his chances very nicely.

"Good-by, young feller," called out the insured pair.

"Good-by," he repeated, jumping off of the boat. "Give my love to one-eyed Matilda," and away he went.

"Who were those two horrors you were chinning to on the boat, Jimmy?" asked Bob, when they were safely seated in the Philadelphia train.

"Graft," quietly answered Jimmy.

"How?"

"Gawks away from hime."

"What of it?"

"I struck them for half a century."

"Fifty dollars?"

"Exactly."

"How?"

"Life-insured them."

"Well, I'll be hanged!" Bob exclaimed, in admiration. "You must be cut out for the business."

"All it wants is a little cheek," laughed Jimmy, as he explained the mode of procedure to Bob.

"And I ain't sold a book yet," said Bob, somewhat ruefully, as he gazed down at the heavy satchel at his feet, filled with specimen works for which he was canvassing.

"All you have to do is to seize your man," said Jimmy.

Arriving at Philadelphia the next morning, Jimmy wanted to be very royal and go to the Continental.

But Bob didn't see it.

"I don't own a State, and I can't afford it," he said. "Let's go to the Joy House—a friend of mine keeps it."

So there they went.

It is a small hotel at Arch and Ninth streets, frequented a "good deal by show folks, and has a very reasonable price-list.

Jimmy and Bob, after breakfasting and engaging rooms, went up into the parlor.

Only one person was there.

A good-natured-looking, fat-bellied man, with a red face and the general look of a western farmer.

"There's a chance," whispered Jimmy to Bob.

"Where?"

"His nibs with the red face."

"Chance for what—a drunk?"

"Nixey; stick him with a book."

Bob's face brightened.

He grabbed his satchel and moved over to the red-faced gentleman.

"Have a cigar?" asked Bob, extending one.

The other smiled, nodded, took the cigar and lit it.

"Nice day," Bob began.

The man smiled and nodded again.

"Fine for reading."

A third nod.

"Wonder who's pulling the string when he nods?" reflected Jimmy.

Bob undid his satchel.

He produced a book.

"I am the agent," said he, "for Bilber & Coble, publishers. I have lots of standard books here for you to select. The best of reading. Here's one, 'Lives of the Queens of Persia,' very interesting and thrilling. Boss lithographs of all the queens—taken from life. In thirty-eight parts, prize check entitling you to a chance in a raffle of a graveyard with every part. Price, a dollar a part."

The man puffed out a cloud of tobacco smoke and smiled amiably.

"Why the deuce don't the image say something?" thought Bob. "I'll try him on another book."

Going down in his satchel, he collared another book.

"Do you like excitement?" he asked.

A nod and a smile.

"Darn if I don't think you go by clockwork!" Bob said to himself; then aloud:

"Here's a book for you, sir. 'The life of Brick-toed Leary, the Bully Biter of Bilgewater.' Elegantly illustrated by the most paralyzed artists of the day. Rich, rare and racy. Tells how Brick-toed Leary killed sixteen policemen with a hydrant, and ran off with a nunnery. Red-hot all over. Complete in ninety-one

volumes, at fifty cents a volume. Fancy supplement of 'Gleanings from the Scriptures,' presented with every other part. How's that?"

The red-faced man crossed his legs, nodded, smiled very sociably, and gazed complacently at Bob.

That young man was fast losing his temper.

"Jimmy," said he, "what is it?"

"Mechanism," replied Jimmy.

"Do you think it's real?"

"Ask it and see."

"Say, you respectable old dummy," sassed Bob, "can't you give a fellow an answer? Do you want any of my books or not? Say something if you ain't deaf and dumb."

The red-faced gentleman smiled all over.

"Me Yarmany, nix fustay Englees," said he; "sprechen sie Deutch?"

Bob's face was a study.

"You infernal old swindler," he shouted, "here I've been patting to you for half an hour, and you don't know whether I've been talking about books or rubber bustles. You be hanged! I can't speak Dutch, and I don't want to."

"Nein," smiled the German, affably.

Out went Bob mad as a mad hare, and Jimmy followed. For some time after that Jimmy geyed Bob about his first experience in book-peddling.

They stayed in the Quaker City several days.

Bob succeeded in disposing of quite a number of books, and Jimmy raked in a few policies.

While in Philadelphia he met with quite an adventure.

Going along Chestnut street one afternoon rigged out in his best, he met a dashing young lady.

She looked at him and smiled.

"Who the deuce can it be?" he thought.

He turned about and followed.

"Beg pardon, miss," said he stepping alongside of her and raising his hat politely.

She looked up.

"Sadie Skinner!" he exclaimed, as he caught a full view of her face.

"Jimmy Grimes!" she cried.

Yes, it was his old flame, Dr. Skinner's daughter of the Military Academy. A year before Jimmy's bounce from the Military Academy Dr. Skinner had died, and Sadie had gone to live with an uncle in Philadelphia.

A chat ensued between the former sweethearts.

"Oh, Jimmy," said Sadie, "I'm living an awful life."

"What's the matter?"

"Uncle's so strict."

"How?"

"He won't let me ever speak to a young gentleman. If he should meet us he'd raise the dickens."

"Is he crazy?"

"No, but he's got very peculiar views about things. Has an awfully absurd idea that girls should not be favored with gentlemen's society until they are of age."

"Who, the girls or the gentlemen?"

"The girls, stupid."

"Oh! He ought to get six months twice a year, for life," laughed Jimmy.

Chatting gaily about old times they continued down the street. Suddenly an old gent rounded the corner in a great hurry and ran point-blank into them.

"Where are you going, old Grampus. Why don't you look ahead, my ancient?" politely asked Jimmy.

The old gent started back.

"It's Uncle Peter!" shrieked Sadie.

"Phew! Here's a nice racket," whistled Jimmy.

The old gent glanced savagely at the pair.

"Drop that young loafer's arm, Sadie," he said. "Nice goings on; who are you, sir?"

"Charley Ross," answered Jimmy, sassy as ever.

"You lie, sir."

"Nice, polite old cock-sparrow you are, ain't yer?" said Jimmy. "Make a nice old ornament to have at a church fair, wouldn't you?"

"How did you come to be with my niece?" asked the old chap, fairly quivering with rage.

"We met, I really don't know how,
But still 'twas all the same,"

sang Jimmy, executing a neat little bit of song and dance. "How's that, Methusaleh? Ain't you going to set them up for the boys?"

"By gad, sir, if this wasn't a public street I'd horsewhip you. Where do you live?"

"Joy House, Arch and Ninth street. Ring the front door and go up on the fire escape," answered Jimmy.

"You'll see me again. Come along, you wicked hussy," said the irascible old chap, grasping his niece's arm and stalking away.

"Good-by, Jonah; remember me to the whale," sang out Jimmy.

"I'll whale you," responded the other, turning and shaking his cane.

"Go rest on an iceberg till you get cool," answered Jimmy, as he kissed his hand to Sadie and sauntered off, to the evident satisfaction of several small boys who stood looking on.

Jimmy told his adventure to Bob, and the two laughed heartily. But they were not through with Sadie's uncle—Mr. Wells was his name—as the sequel will show.

Next day Bob rushed into Jimmy's room with excitement written on his face.

"What's the matter—burst a faro bank?" asked Jimmy.

"No."

"Why this excitability?"

"You'll be killed."

"How long since you turned prophet?"

"Sadie's uncle is right behind me!"

It was Jimmy's turn to look excited.

"Where in the dickens did the ancient drop from?" he asked.

"I pass. He came in the office, asked the clerk for the number of your room, ascertained it, and here he comes!"

Sure enough, footsteps were heard on the stairs.

"He's got a cane," whispered Bob.

"Well," said Jimmy, coolly, "I think I must have a fit."

"A what?"

"A fit."

"What for?"

"To paralyze the old fossil. A first-class, top-shelf epileptic fit got up for this occasion only. Tumble?"

"Rather."

Rap—rap! came a cane against the door.

"Come in," said Jimmy.

The door opened, and Mr. Wells, looking as irascible and red-faced as ever, entered.

"Oh," said Jimmy, politely, "Commodore Vanderbilt, how do you do? Shall I take a chair?"

"None of your sauce, sir," said Mr. Wells, "I have come after an apology."

"A what, sir?"

"An apology."

"Bob," said Jimmy, without a smile, "look into my valise and see if I have an apology."

"No," promptly answered Bob.

"Very sorry, sir, but my apologies are all gone. Will you have a clean shirt, sir, or a pair of socks?" Jimmy queried.

Mr. Wells fairly got purple with rage.

He gripped his cane tightly.

"I intend to chastise you with soundness, sir," he bawled.

Jimmy looked coolly at him.

"Why don't you do it with a stick?" asked our hero.

The irascible old chap made a furious blow at him.

Unfortunately Jimmy was not there when it fell.

The result was that Mr. Wells only shattered the back of a chair.

"There's three dollars gone," remarked Jimmy; "hope you own a furniture factory, sir, if you intend to keep that up long. But I don't care, I don't own the room. There's a safe, smash that, if you want to. Anything to make it pleasant for you."

"You gallows-bird, you!" shrieked the other.

"Guess it's about time for the first scene," reflected Jimmy, slyly slipping a piece of soap into his mouth.

Suddenly his body became rigid, his eyes glared, and his hands moved aimlessly up and down.

He frothed at the mouth, and gasped inarticulately.

Old Wells stared at him in his surprise, and his cane paused, uplifted in the air.

"What the devil ails the young ruffian?" he asked.

"Look out for your life!" shouted Bob, behind a sofa.

"Why?"

"He's got a fit."

"A fit?"

"Yes, sir. For heaven's sake, if you value your life, flee."

"I've seen folks in fits before," sturdily answered Mr. Wells.

"But not like his."

"In what respect?"

"He goes clean off his nut."

"What in the deuce is that?"

"He turns crazy. He had a fit one day home, and stabbed his mother with a carving knife. If he's got a pistol we're both dead men. And, oh, heavens!"

"Well," impatiently interrupted Mr. Wells, beginning to feel a little scared.

"He's between you and the door, and the only window you can get out of is barred. For heaven's sake, humor him."

"How?"

"He may think he's a bottle, or anything. You must think so, too, or he may kill you."

PART III.

"What shall I do?" asked old Wells, getting scared at Jimmy's looks and actions.

"Pretty birdie—pretty birdie," whispered Jimmy, extending his hand toward Wells.

"He ain't got a fit—he's crazy!" cried the old chap.

"He's both," said Bob.

"Pretty birdie—pretty birdie," repeated Jimmy, stepping up near Wells, at which action the latter precipitately retreated.

"He takes you for a bird," said Bob.

"A nice figure I've got for a bird," replied Wells.

"For heaven's sake, humor him. He may cut your throat."

"Oh, yes; then I'm a bird. Nice bird I make, too; poll-parrot probably," growled the other.

"Birdie sing," said Jimmy.

"Birdie's broke—can't sing," replied Wells. "Nice muss I've got into through that infernal niece of mine."

"Birdie sing," repeated Jimmy, this time with a stern face.

"Sing!" yelled Bob.

"I can't."

"Try to."

"I tell you I can't."

"Birdie sing or birdie dies!" cried Jimmy, producing a silver-plated revolver from his pocket.

"Oh, Lor'!" groaned Wells, his face turning white. "I suppose I've got to. Next he'll be wanting his birdie to dance, I suppose. Probably if there was a tight-rope here I'd have to walk it."

In a voice which sounded like an asthmatic fog-horn in deep pain, Wells began:

"What made you leave your house and home?

What made you leave your baby?

What made you leave your own true love?

To go with Gipsy Davy?"

"Birdie sings nice," said Jimmy.

"Well, you are crazy now, sure!" exclaimed Wells, while Bob nearly gave the whole joke away by laughing like a fiend behind the sofa.

All at once Jimmy's face became dark as death. A sombre look flashed in his eyes and he crossed his arms.

"I am Tecumseh, the Rising Sun of the Cherokees," he said, in a stately tone.

Now, old Wells possessed a sort of grim humor, and as he was firmly convinced that Jimmy was temporarily insane, he determined to follow Bob's advice.

"Tecumseh big Injun—eat much—heap great jackass," he grunted.

"Does my white brother dare to scoff?" asked Jimmy, fiercely.

"Oh, no; certainly not. Tecumseh much big chief."

"White brother, beware. Tecumseh has dug up the hatchet."

"Bully for Tecumseh!"

"He is on the war-path!"

"Good!"

"The walls of Tecumseh's wigwam will hang with the reeking scalps of the pale-faces."

"Yes, very handsome ornaments. Nice man, Tecumseh. Noble-hearted child of the forest."

"The pale-faces' huts shall be burned to the ground. Their boys shall be scalped—their women shall be our wives! The fairest of all the white lilies shall be Tecumseh's wife!"

"Very poetical. The fairest of the white lilies will no doubt be highly tickled. Oh, yes, Tecumseh immense Injun!"

Even Jimmy felt like bursting out into a good square laugh, for old Wells was intensely comical.

He realized that he could not be Tecumseh very much longer without an expose.

So he changed his character.

"Who calls Tecumseh?" he shouted. "I am not Tecumseh, I am Mary, Queen of Scots."

"Oh, that's too much," said Wells, who was getting rapidly over his fears as Jimmy seemed to be very peaceable. "Mary, Queen of Scots—indeed. Mary, Queen of the Imps!"

"What, my Lord Burleigh!" cried Jimmy, straightening up. "Dare you dispute my title?"

"Certainly not. I kneel at your feet, fair lady," said Wells.

"What does your majesty wish?"

"Have you seen my sister?"

"What sister?"

"Elizabeth."

"Elizabeth, New Jersey?"

"Traitor, you dare to make merry! I will have you carried to the Tower. Where are my yeomen?"

"Give it up—offer a reward, your majesty," snapped Wells.

Jimmy could hardly keep his face, but he went on with an effort.

"Elizabeth is not Queen of England!"

"Heavens, you don't say so! Give it to the Associated Press."

"She is a usurper."

"Who'd a thought it!"

"I'll be blessed," reflected Jimmy, "if his old nibs ain't having about as much fun out of this racket as I am. Guess it is about time I scare him."

Jimmy changed his facial muscles once more. He had a remarkably mobile countenance, and could assume almost any expression at will.

"Villain!" bawled he, in a voice quivering with rage, "where is my daughter?"

"Gone to look for the yeomen," returned Wells.

"Six years ago those foul fiends again enticed her from her peaceful home and ruined her. Revenge—ha—ha! Yes, I will have revenge!" Jimmy shouted, grabbing Wells by the neck.

"Cheese it, he's got an ugly fit on now!" yelled Bob.

"Oh, sir!" Wells ejaculated, all his self-possession leaving him, "go away."

"Never!" Jimmy shouted, tightening his grasp on the old chap's neck. "I've got you now. I won't go away till your bloated corpse lies stiff in death on this floor!"

"Ring for help," pleaded Wells.

"I can't," answered Bob, "the bell-rope's broke!"

"Yell for assistance!"

"I dassent—he'd kill me."

"Down, fiend, down!" roared Jimmy, upsetting the other. "Wait there till I get my knife!"

Muttering furiously, our hero released his victim and walked toward the further end of the room.

Old Wells saw a chance to escape. Stealthily he got upon his feet and dashed out of the door.

As it closed upon him, Jimmy and Bob both burst into a simultaneous laugh.

"How did I do it?" queried Jimmy.

"Big," answered Bob.

"Was I a good madman in a fit?"

"Way up."

"I guess he won't call around after a second apology."

"I bet he comes back again with a cop."

"We'll fool him again if he does," Jimmy laughed.

Bob's surmise proved true.

Soon the sound of many footsteps ascending the stairs were heard.

They grew nearer.

"This is the room, gentlemen," old Wells' voice was heard to exclaim.

Without ceremony the door flew open.

A crowd of idlers, with a stalwart policeman at their head, and old Wells and the proprietor of the hotel in the background, appeared on the threshold.

From the lurid account given by Wells, they had probably expected to see Bob's lifeless corpse extended on the floor, and Jimmy raving around with a blood-stained knife in the most approved fashion of lunatics.

Instead, Jimmy was quietly sitting smoking a cigar, with a novel in his hand, and Bob was writing at a desk.

"Well, gents," asked Jimmy, as the crowd stopped in astonishment, "what's up?"

The gents gazed speechlessly at Mr. Wells.

"Arrest the boy, officer," ordered the old chap. "He's mad!"

"Who's mad?" asked Jimmy.

"You are."

"Oh, come off, what are you giving me?"

"You threatened to kill me five minutes ago."

"Who did?"

"You did."

"You're 'way off your base. Where did I?"

"Right here, in this room."

"My venerable relic, you're mad yourself. You've never been in this room in your life."

"You've got the cunning of insanity!" cried Wells. "Officer, do your duty—arrest him. He's a dangerous lunatic."

The officer looked the picture of astonishment.

"I'll be blamed if I do," said he. "There's nothing the matter with the young gentleman."

"Officer," calmly said Jimmy, indicating Wells, "take that old fool out of my room. He's drunk!"

"Young man," said Wells, appealing to Bob, "didn't your friend have a fit and go crazy?"

"Not a bit of it," answered Bob, as cool as an icicle.

"Now, gentlemen," authoritatively requested Jimmy, "will you please oblige me by vacating my apartment? I don't know where

you picked up the gray-haired curiosity, but he is evidently very lush, and out of his head. Officer, you'd better put him in a cab and send him home to his afflicted family."

The policeman grasped Wells by the collar.

"Come along, sir," said he, "you bet your sweet life, old man, you don't get me to go on such a wild-goose chase again."

Jimmy got a note from Sadie the next day.

She said the peeler had, in spite of all her uncle's resistance, put him in a cab and sent him home.

She further said that the affair had worked upon his mind so that he was sick in bed, and Jimmy might come around and call.

Jimmy did, and enjoyed several merry evenings, while the old man grunted and groaned with pain upstairs.

It must not be supposed that our hero neglected business, however, in his pursuit of love and racket. No, sir!

Jimmy was an indefatigable life-insurance agent, and got kicked out of half a dozen offices.

But he didn't care.

He'd go right back the next day and torture his unfortunate victim into a life insurance policy.

One day he got into an upstairs office on Chestnut street—a lawyer's office.

A bald-headed chap sat at a desk eagerly scratching away at some sort of a legal document.

"Mr. McNab?" said Jimmy, very politely, for he had seen his name on the door.

"Yes," snapped the man at the desk.

"Ah, fine day," affably continued Jimmy. "How are Mrs. McNab and all the little McNabs? Blooming, I suppose?"

"I ain't married, you fool!"

"Ah, beg pardon. Mr. McNab, I have called upon a matter of vital importance."

"Suppose you want me to take six tickets for a church fair. Won't do it—I'm a cannibal—I'm a heathen!" snarled McNab.

"I never attend a church myself," smoothly said Jimmy. "You have a mother, Mr. McNab?"

"Probably. I wouldn't be here if I hadn't."

"She is alive?"

"Was at ten minutes past eight this morning when I left home."

"You love her?"

"It's none of your infernal business! Who the deuce are you, and what in the deuce do you want?"

"To confer with you upon a subject of vital importance to your welfare," solemnly said Jimmy.

"Oh, ho! Temperance lecture," sneered McNab. "No use. I'm hopeless. I'm a terrible example. I get drunk twice a day, and kill folks. I'm always beastly intoxicated. Get out—I'm busy."

"I'm not a temperance lecturer, neither am I a Sister of Charity."

"What in the name of Lucifer are you, then?"

"I'm a life insurance agent!"

McNab got right up.

"There's the door!" yelled he. "Skedaddle, I've got my life insured in sixty-one companies already. That's enough. Mizzle!"

"But," remarked Jimmy, taking a chair, "ours is the best in the world. Premiums always paid, rates lower, no difficulty about medical examination. We'll insure a man on his beath-bed. We—"

"Will you go?" roared McNab. "Or shall I throw you out? I don't want my life insured. I never had a life!"

Jimmy got up very quietly.

"Tra, la, la, old fireworks," said he. "I'll see you later!"

"Go to —," replied McNab, mentioning a very hot place, and slamming the door violently behind Jimmy.

As luck willed it that night, Jimmy dropped into a small restaurant on a side street.

There sat McNab at a table, with a glass of ale, a pork pie, a Welsh rarebit, and a plate of pudding in front of him.

Jimmy rushed up to him.

"Thank heaven," fervently exclaimed Jimmy, "I am not too late!"

"Too late for what?" asked McNab, in surprise.

"To save your mother from ruin."

"Who is going to ruin her?"

"I'm in the nick of time," and Jimmy pulled out a blank-book and a pencil. "You'll be a dead man an hour after eating all of that stuff. Grasp the chance, get your life insured!"

"I'll be hanged if you ain't that confounded life insurance fiend that was in the office this morning."

"You're correct, but I don't cherish any animosity. Think how you'd feel if you died without being insured in our company. What's your first name?"

"Blazes!" shouted McNab. "If you don't get out of here and leave me alone I'll break your skull with a chair."

"Then you don't want your life insured?" grinned Jimmy, putting up his book. "All right, I'll send an undertaker around in

twenty minutes; you'll need one after you get through with that grub."

All the reply McNab made was to utter a very bad word, and look half inclined to get up and butcher Jimmy on the spot.

Next day, Jimmy, passing down Market street, saw a man running at full speed after a car.

It was McNab.

Off went Jimmy after him at a rapid rate.

"McNab—McNab!" howled Jimmy.

McNab heard his name called and slackened up.

Jimmy was by his side in a minute.

"Reflect on the uncertainties of life, Mr. McNab," he said, "the car may blow up, your shoe might burst and kill you. Insure your life before it is too late."

McNab looked at the speaker and did some tall swearing, as he saw the car for which he was running go around the corner out of sight.

"Holy, kicking Moses!" yelled he, making a frantic dive for his pistol-pocket. "Where is my revolver?"

"You never had any!" yelled Jimmy, edging off. "There never were any revolvers."

"If I've a friend here, let him lend me a shotgun," implored McNab.

"You ain't got any friend. Come, here is your last chance; get your life insured and die happy!" shouted Jimmy.

McNab made a blind rush for him, but Jimmy, agilely dodging, succeeded in placing a post between him and the irate lawyer.

McNab grabbed the post, and Jimmy jumped into a passing car.

"Good-by, McNab!" he cried. "I'm coming around to your office this afternoon to see you."

"You won't get in!"

"We'll see. Da-da, take my love to the baby."

McNab fairly foamed in the mouth, he was so furious, particularly as several passersby had stopped and were laughing at him.

"He'll come to my office, the little son of a gun!" he repeated. "We'll see."

McNab went right down to a dog-fancier's.

"I want a bull-dog," he said.

"What sort of a bull-dog?" asked the dog-fancier.

"The worst brute you've got. A dog that will bite anything. If you've got a dog that killed anybody in a particularly atrocious way, I'll buy him."

The dog-fancier grinned and lugged out an overgrown, ugly bull-dog from a dark corner.

The animal glanced with its sunken eye at McNab, and seemed half disposed to chaw him up.

"That ere cuss chawed up a kid in St. Louis," remarked the dog-fancier.

"Killed a young goat?"

"Oh, blast yer bloomin' hignorance, chawed up a young 'un. He's a mangler."

McNab smiled with pleasure.

"A mangler is just what I want," he said.

The dog was purchased.

The seller offered to bring him around to McNab's office immediately.

With a satisfied grin, McNab went away.

To a gun store.

He bought a double-barreled shotgun, a revolver and a cavalry sword.

"I reckon that life insurance imp won't leave my office whole," he murmured, as he carted his purchases to his office.

Arriving there he found the bull-dog already there in charge of its former owner.

"Where will I put the dorg?" asked the last gentleman.

"Tie him to the table," replied McNab.

It was done.

Then McNab loaded the shotgun with powder. To his great disappointment he had forgot to buy cartridges or bullets. Both revolver and gun were useless.

He got up and bolted, barred and locked the door of his office.

"Anyhow," he said, "the fiend can't get in unless he crawls through the key-hole, and even if he does that dog will make short work of him," and he was soon engrossed in preparing a brief.

A little while after Jimmy arrived.

He tried the door.

"Mr. McNab!" cried he.

McNab chuckled maliciously, but answered not.

"Oh, McNab, you awfully, awful boy, open the door—ain't you ashamed of yourself, you horrid fellow, to keep your little pet outside in all the cold!" cried Jimmy, imitating a lady's voice.

But McNab refused to bite.

He wouldn't answer.

"McNab, you bald-headed old son-of-a-sea-cow, come out here or I'll break your old door down!" Jimmy shouted, in his natural tone.

"Shut up—go West!" bawled McNab, bending down to his brief again.

"He's there," murmured Jimmy, "locked in. Well, I just guess that I'm sharp and smart enough to get into that room, and sassy enough to insure his life after I get there."

Jimmy looked about him.

There was a small corridor which ran off the hall almost in front of him.

About half way down it was a window.

Jimmy peered into it.

It opened directly into McNab's office.

Our hero tried it.

It was unfastened.

He raised it up.

"Say, McNab," said he, pulling out his pencil and book, "don't you want your life insured?"

McNab grabbed everything that was on his desk and hurled them at the speaker.

"You pestiferous nuisance—you pertinacious skunk!" he roared. "I'll—I'll—"

"Easy—easy, old fireworks. Look out for the blood vessels. Recollect you ain't insured," warned Jimmy.

Suddenly a new actor appeared on the scene.

The bull-dog snapped his chain.

With a savage bark, he crouched in the corner, calculating, apparently, to spring onto McNab.

That gentleman made a furious rush for the window.

Jimmy slammed it down into his face.

"Nixey, Jim," said he, "you can't get out. You ain't insured in our company, and your life ain't worth a continental darn to me."

"For heaven's sake open the window!" pleaded McNab, as the dog still hesitated.

"Will you insure with us?" asked Jimmy.

The dog growled and advanced.

McNab clambered on top of his desk with surprising agility for a man of his years.

Jimmy partially opened the window so that he could see the circus.

"Look out for the dog, McNab!" Jimmy cautioned. "He's a king high kicker."

"Please open the window and let me out."

"Business first, old fireworks. Insure your life with us, and up goes the window. Don't, and up goes the dog."

PART IV.

McNab was in a nice fix.

He was only elevated a few feet above the dog, and the animal threatened every moment to jump up and gobble him.

And that rascal of a Jimmy was outside laughing as if it was one of the most comical occurrences in this world.

"Go it, doggie!" egged on Jimmy. "Eat him up—bite the ear off of the bad man. What time shall I set your funeral for?"

"Please open the window?" pleaded McNab.

"Open nothing!"

"But I will be killed!"

"Good for the undertaking trade."

"Haven't you a heart?"

"Just put it in hock. Go for him, doggie!"

The bull-dog snarled, and apparently crouched himself for a spring.

McNab performed a sort of terror-inspired can-can on his desk.

"Do you prefer cut flowers or bouquets strewn on your grave?" asked Jimmy, whistling encouragingly at the dog.

"For heaven's sake, open the window and let me escape!"

"Will you insure your life?"

"Oh, Lord—yes!"

Jimmy threw a blank policy to him.

"Sign your cognomen," he said.

"How can I?"

"That's none of my business."

"If I get down into my chair the blasted dog will go for me. I'll sign it outside."

"Nixey, Jim. Sign right where you are. I don't care for the dog."

McNab saw that there was no loop-hole for escape.

He stooped gingerly down, picked up a pen from beneath his feet, dipped it into his ink-stand by an elaborate contortion, and signed his name.

"There," he sighed, handing it over to Jimmy.

Jimmy took it, and opened the window.

McNab bounded out as if he had been brd and born an acrobat.

The dog bounded after him, but was met by the closed sash, which Jimmy banged down right in the nick of time.

"McNab," advised Jimmy, in a friendly tone, "the next time you get a dog, get a stone one, or else glue him fast to the walk."

"You be blanked!" snarled McNab, as he darted away. "I'll shoot you on sight the next time I meet you."

Jimmy went triumphantly home, and related the affair to Bob. The two had a good laugh.

Meanwhile, Bob was meeting adventures, too.

One was rather comical.

He wandered one day to the house of an ingenious gentleman who had been pestered nearly to death by book-agents, peddlers, sewing-machine fiends, and so forth.

And this gentleman had invented several scientific arrangements especially for their benefit.

Of course Bob did not know of this.

He boldly rang the bell.

The name on the door-plate was "Muddrick," and consequently Bob boldly asked the servant if Mr. Muddrick was in.

She replied affirmatively, and asked his name.

"Bob Hoyt."

He was ushered into a handsomely-furnished parlor, and asked to take a chair.

Presently a cheery-looking, good-humored gentleman appeared.

"Mr. Muddrick?" asked Bob.

"Yes, sir."

"Guess I've gripped a graft here," thought Bob, as he got up and very politely began:

"My object, Mr. Muddrick, in calling here, is to persuade you to purchase some of the most valuable books ever issued—sold only by subscription."

"You're a book-agent?" suavely asked Mr. Muddrick.

"Yes, sir."

"How fortunate. I've just bought a large slaughter-house in Berlin, which I intend converting into a public library. What books have you?"

"The Barkeeper's Guide," complete in ninety-eight parts. Just the thing for Sunday-schools and church fairs. Tells how to produced a whisky sour out of hot water and soft soap."

"How many parts?"

"Ninety-eight."

"That is hardly enough. I don't want something that one can pick up and read through in an hour. What else?"

"Manson's 'Married Life.' A book for the home circle and private theatricals. In eight volumes of three hundred pages each. A fine chromo of Mont Blanc in flames given away with each volume."

"I think I will take three thousand eight hundred and six of that work," said Mr. Muddrick, reflectively scratching his chin.

Bob fairly gasped for breath. His fortune was made.

"What next?" asked Mr. Muddrick.

"Granville's 'Rise and Fall of the Patagonian Aztecs.' A most moral, interesting and didactic work. Complete in seventy-four weekly parts, at one dollar per part. By paying three dollars extra you can, owing to arrangements entered into by the enterprising publishers, secure an excellent burial lot."

"Nine thousand and fifty of that would be about the proper figure," calculated Mr. Muddrick. "Will you please sit down in that chair, and write orders down."

He pointed to a rather curious-looking chair with a queer spring beneath it, which stood by a table.

But Bob noticed nothing. He was so completely overwhelmed by the immensity of the order that he wouldn't probably have noticed the chair if it had been made of butter.

He sat down unsuspectingly.

Mr. Muddrick pressed a spring beneath his foot, and as if impelled from a cannon, Bob rose out of that chair and soared toward the ceiling.

The chair was nothing more nor less than a powerful catapult, worked on the same principle as the spring in a child's gun.

Bob fell down all in a lump, the most astonished-looking boy you ever saw.

"That's my patent bounce," said Mr. Muddrick, in high glee, "especially for book-agents. You fiends have pestered my life nearly out and I'm just getting square. Oh, sit down again—write out your orders. I'll have the books sent by carrier pigeons."

Bob saw that he was sold.

He put his books beneath his arm and quietly got.

And as he went down the front steps, bruised both in body and mind, Mr. Muddrick called out the parlor window after him:

"Say, sonny, if you see a sewing-machine man around anywhere, send him up here. I've got a steam kicker I want to try on him. Tell him I want a sewing-machine in every room in the house if you want to."

Bob did not relate this adventure to Jimmy.

Before they left Philadelphia, however, Jimmy had an experience of the sagacity of the Heathen Chinese.

The bell-boy came up to his room with the information that there was somebody below who wanted to see him.

"Who is it?" Jimmy asked.

"A haythen," was the reply.

"A Chineer?"

"Yes, sir."

"What name?"

"Ah Ting."

"Fine name for a morgue. What does he want?"

"He wouldn't say, sir."

"Well, fire him up."

In a few seconds a veritable Chinese, blue blouse, wooden shoes, pig-tail and all, appeared grinning from ear to ear.

"Halloo, John!" said Jimmy. "Who broke the shell and let you out?"

"No unstandee," replied the Chinese, still grinning.

"Then settee."

The celestial looked perplexed. Plainly he did not appreciate the beauties of the American tongue.

"You Jimmy Glines?" he asked.

"Am I, Bob?" Jimmy asked.

"There's a story to that effect."

"Yes, I am," laughed Jimmy, "what can I do for you—you walking tea store chromo?"

"You aglent for le George Washington Insulance Company?"

"Oh, get an interpreter."

"You life insulance man?"

"You are right."

The Chinese smiled, cunningly.

"Me bruddey of Hi Pi," he said.

"Lord, why didn't you tell me so before?" remarked Jimmy. "I'd had the room lit up and a brass band on the stairs to receive you. Who is Hi Pi, anyhow?"

"You inslure he life," said Ah Ting, "twenty t'ousand dollars."

The words made Jimmy recollect that he had insured the life of a rich Chinaman a few days previous.

"Sure enough—what of it?" he said.

"If Hi Pi die he gette allee money?" asked Ah Ting.

"Certainly."

"Well, Hi Pi he go ridee on a bobby-tail car."

"Voluptuous Hi Pi."

"He standee on stepee."

"Noble humility."

"Fattee woman gettee on with washy-wash-wash."

"Remarkable."

"Pushee for Hi Pi."

"Barbarous fat woman."

"He faller off; he gettee run over by truck; he halfee deadee."

"What of it?"

"He wantee halfee money."

Jimmy looked at Bob in dismay.

The cool, simple cheek of the almond-eyed child of China staggered him.

"Bob," he remarked, "the Chinese element is the curse of this country. We are ruined by Chinese cheap labor."

In the language of the poem, Jimmy "went for that Heathen Chineer."

In about one minute Ah Ting was sitting on the sidewalk, rubbing the bay-window of his pantaloons.

He complained to a policeman.

"Boy uppee stairs kicke me down," he said.

The noble officer raised his locust.

"Get out, yer moon-eyed leper; if ye don't shut up yer gob an' lave I'll paralyze ye!" he said; "razoo, ye rice ater!"

Ah Ting did "razoo."

He got up and moved sadly away, pondering on American customs and ways.

In Chestnut street there was a large drug store which employed five or six clerks.

Jimmy had gone into it about twice a day during his stay in Philadelphia, endeavoring to coax them to take out life insurance policies.

He had pestered them almost to death.

They wanted to put up some job that would effectually scare him away.

Finally a day came.

Business was light in the drug store and the proprietor was away.

The clerks were talking together by the door.

Presently one of them discerned Jimmy going into a book store a short distance up the street.

"Holy Peter!" he cried, in comic dismay, "there's that infernal fiend of a life insurance agent!"

"Where?" asked half a dozen.

"Up the street."

"He'll be in here?"

"Sure."

"Let's kill him."

"We'll fix him somehow," said one; "he's worse than the seven years itch."

Then arose the question of how the fixing was to be done.

"Club him."

"Give him laudanum."

"Cover him with pepper porous plasters."

"Drown him in the soda fountain."

Several more suggestions of this sort were proposed, until a happy idea occurred to the prescription clerk.

"We'll seltzer him," he said, and he explained the way in which he intended to work the racket.

A unanimous cry of "Bully!" arose from every lip.

"Cheese it—here he comes now!" cried a watcher.

In a second the whole gang were behind the counter.

They had hardly got everything fixed before Jimmy marched in, totally unconscious of the reception that he was about to receive.

"Good morning," said he, politely.

"Good morning," replied the prescription clerk, politely.

"I have—" began Jimmy.

"The cramps, I suppose," suavely interrupted the clerk. "Use Dr. Rotgut's Cramp-killer. Finest in the land."

"I haven't the cramps," answered Jimmy. "I simply have—"

"Erysipelas. Apply a plaster of pure tar and persimmons. Only fifty cents per small bottle."

"See here," said Jimmy, "do you know who I am?"

"William Tell," said one clerk.

"Paper-collar Jack," suggested a second.

"Washington's Birthday," hazarded a third.

"The bald-headed American Eagle," ventured a fourth.

Jimmy perceived that the whole mob was on the guy.

But he didn't care.

"I'm a life insurance agent and I want to insure your lives," boldly he said. "Do it cheap and reasonable."

"What company?" asked the prescription clerk.

"The George Washington Life Insurance and Mutual Protective Association."

"The George Washington?"

"Yes."

The prescription clerk scratched his head.

"Billy," said he to a mate, "who was George Washington?"

"Got hung last week in Greenwalk for stealing a sidewalk," was the reply.

"No," the prescription clerk said, "George Washington was:

First in peace,

First in war,

First in the ranks

At the free lunch bar,"

chorused the rest of the clerks, doing an elaborate "Domino" simultaneously.

Jimmy looked surprised.

"If this is a lunatic asylum they ought to put a sign outside," he muttered, moving for the door.

They didn't want him to get out, though, not for a while yet.

"Hold on," called out the prescription clerk, "I want my life insured."

Jimmy started back.

"On the square?" he said.

"Dead level."

"For how much?"

"Oh, about three cents."

"You're too new. You want to lay somewhere on a shelf and get dusty," replied Jimmy, in disgust.

"I was only fooling," said the other, "I do want my life insured. I'm going to hire a mother next week and I want her to be fixed if I die."

"That's biz," said Jimmy, taking out his book. "What's the value?"

"Make it five thousand."

"Twenty-five dollars a year."

"Oh, put it down nearer the ground; I ain't a resurrectionist."

"Can't, possibly."

"Will you take it out in soap?"

"Nixey, Jim."

"Nursing bottles?"

"Nixey, twice."

"Then," said the clerk, with a sigh, "I'm afraid I can't stand the pressure."

Jimmy realized that there was no earnestness about the other, and he smiled, knowingly.

"You ought to get bound and lent out for a comic almanac," he said. "Some day that big brain of yours will burst, and you will be sorry that you didn't get your life insured."

"Try those curiosities over there," responded the clerk, with a grin.

Jimmy did brace the other clerks.

They were all intensely anxious to get their bones insured. So at least they said.

But there was some obstacle in every case.

One had the heart disease.

Another was afflicted with a prize cancer.

A third had expected for years to die at any moment in a fit, as he was subject to them.

A fourth was deaf, had strokes of paralysis, and was threatened with assassination by a vindictive foe.

In short, Jimmy could not do business with any of them, and they professed to be very sorry.

He started to go out in disgust.

The prescription clerk called him.

"I am very sorry that we can't insure in your company," he said, "but don't let us part as enemies."

"No fear," replied Jimmy.

The clerk opened the cigar case.

"Have a cigar?" he asked.

Jimmy was somewhat suspicious of this sudden hospitality.

"Are the smokes all right?" queried he.

"Oh, yes."

"No gunpowder filling?"

"Not much."

"Ain't tin?"

"You bet not. They're Flor de Fumars. Imported. Just try one."

Jimmy did.

He lighted it, and took a few experimental puffs. The cigar was really excellent.

"Thanks," said he.

"Have something to drink?" continued the clerk.

"Rather," Jimmy answered. "I'll try some whisky."

"Sorry," returned the clerk, "but we're S. T. Strict Temperance. There isn't even a smell of whisky in the whole store."

"What have you got there?" Jimmy propounded.

"Mineral waters."

"Give us some; it will scare my stomach, but I'll try to stand it."

"What kind?"

"Seltzer."

The prescription clerk smiled wickedly. There was a malicious expression in his eyes.

"Give the sucker seltzer," he ordered.

Simultaneously every clerk drew forth a seltzer siphon, and pressing the knob on top, squirted the sparkling seltzer into Jimmy's face.

Jimmy was completely taken off his guard.

"Hold on," he yelled, trying to veil his face with his hands.

"Give it to him. Soak him with seltzer!" yelled the prescription clerk, squirting out of a bottle himself.

The seltzer was streaming down Jimmy, and ruining his clothes.

"Cheese it, boys," cried he. "I don't want to be found drowned."

"Get your life insured," cried one.

"That's all right," answered Jimmy. "I acknowledge the cake. You've got square with me."

Seeing that Jimmy was taking the joke so good-naturedly the clerks relented.

They had expected to see him get away up on his ear, prance around and raise the Old Nick generally.

If he had they would have shown no mercy to him.

As it was they pronounced him a trump.

"Here, young fellow," said the prescription clerk, "you're a little red brick, you are. I'll be hanged if you can't insure my life. Put me down for a five thousand dollar policy."

Sure enough Jimmy did.

Two of the other clerks followed his example, and Jimmy left the drug store in about thirty dollars.

"I'll be willing to take a seltzer shower bath every day for a thirty dollar boodle," he grinned. "I tell you what, it pays to be good-natured sometimes."

PART V.

Upon leaving Philadelphia, Jimmy and Bob took a buggy and started out on a tour among the small towns of Pennsylvania.

A week passed without any noticeable incidents other than the numerous small occurrences which always happen to a traveler.

One night they reached a tall, grim house built of stones, which looked particularly cold and frigid.

It seemed a sort of a cross between a tomb and a jail.

"That's a nice-looking shanty," remarked Jimmy.

"Nice to get hung in!" growled Bob.

"I wonder does anybody want their lives insured in there?"

"Don't believe anybody lives there."

But Bob was wrong.

A grim-looking female, built on the symmetrical scale of a fence-

rail, with a face as pretty as a coal-hole cover, stepped out on the stoop.

She was a cast-iron-looking woman.

One of the sympathetic females who look as if the highest pleasure of their lives consisted in cutting off somebody's arm or leg, or witnessing a lively accident where somebody gets mashed into a jelly.

"Ain't she sweet?" said Jimmy.

"She wouldn't even do to sit up with a corpse," said Bob.

"Bet I can insure her life."

"You're crazy."

"Bet I do."

"You might just as well go over and try to insure a grave-yard."

"Will you bet?" persisted Jimmy.

"I'd have a soft thing."

"I'll risk it. Come, I'll bet you a good fifty-cent cigar that I insure her life."

"Lunatics should be humored. I'll take it."

Jimmy stopped the horse and got out.

He opened the rusty gate and walked up the path leading to the stoop.

"What do you want? We ain't got no cold vittles," savagely asserted the female.

"Lady Hamilton, how do you do?" said Jimmy, warmly.

The woman gazed at him.

"I ain't Lady Hamilton," she said; "my name is Martha Dobbs."

Jimmy smiled charmingly.

"Staying here incognito, hey?" he continued. "Well, I don't blame you. Ever since young Stuyvesant shot himself because you refused his hand, society has been talking."

"What society?" said Miss Dobbs, staring a little.

"Washington society."

"I never was in Washington."

"Well—so you say. Maybe you've heard that your old friend, Count Stabmeintheback, was thrown out of a carriage while riding, and that the Baroness de Colic has run away with the Duke of Opengash?"

"I tell you I ain't Lady Hamilton," said the woman.

"Well, you look enough like her to be her twin sister," replied Jimmy. "She was a very handsome woman."

"Hey?"

"Oh, yes. Her picture as Pegasus was taken, and six thousand copies sold."

"Do tell."

"Oh, fact. By the way, you say your name is Dobbs?"

"Yes, sir."

"I can't believe it."

"Why not?"

"Why, I stopped at a house down the road, and a woman commenced telling me about some Miss Dobbs."

"What sort of a house?"

"Red house, with a white door and green blinds," answered Jimmy, at a venture.

Miss Dobbs reddened.

"What did the woman look like?"

"Like a picture of Misery struck with a stuffed club," Jimmy answered.

"Red hair?"

"Yes; conflagration color."

"Big mouth?"

"Terrible. Thought it was a cellar first."

"Cross-eyed?"

"Rather. Could see way round to the back of her head."

"Big feet?"

"Didn't know that they were feet. Thought that they were piano-boxes."

Miss Dobbs nodded again. Very savagely this time.

"It is that Blinder girl—she's awful jealous of me," she said. "What did she tell you about me?"

"She said you were as homely as a trash-basket, bow-legged, had a tin nose, opened your mouth so wide that you had to put gates on it to keep from falling in; and that you had a hand like a Cincinnati ham."

Miss Dobbs trembled with suppressed fury.

"Anything else?" asked she.

"Lots," Jimmy returned. "I wanted to insure her life."

"She ain't got money enough to insure that hump-back of hers," sarcastically commented his listener.

"I told her," continued Jimmy, "that I thought of stopping somewhere else, and she said—"

"What did she say?"

"Said she: 'For Heaven's sake don't go to Miss Dobbs. She won't get her life insured. She's too miserly to die for fear that her funeral will cost too much. She wears one apron for a year, and when she washes it—well, they have soup at her house right after.'"

"Did she insure?" asked Miss Dobbs, her fingers working convulsively, as if she desired to tear her imaginary caluminator's hair.

"Said she couldn't afford it."

"She's right—they're so poor that they have to put a lighted candle in the stove winters to make folks believe they've got a fire. She said that I wouldn't get my life insured?"

"Said your face was sufficient insurance. I'll be euchered if I could lie like some folks."

"I will insure," said Miss Dobbs, sternly. "Put me down for five thousand dollars. And, I say."

"Yes, Lady Ham—excuse me, Miss Dobbs."

"When you go by that house again, you stop and tell that wreck that I have insured, will you, and that if I was too poor to get my life insured, I'd go and die."

Jimmy promised, and with many a smile and bow took his departure.

He went down to the buggy.

"Get the bounce?" asked Bob.

"Nixey, Jim."

"What luck?"

"Insured her life."

"Oh, go off. Make the taffy thinner."

"It's so," and Jimmy proudly exhibited the filled-in policy.

Bob was completely nonplused.

"How on earth did you work the racket?" asked he.

Jimmy told him.

"Guess I'll try her with a book," said Bob.

"I would," replied Jimmy.

Bob went up to the house.

Miss Dobbs was still on the veranda.

"Well, what do you want?" she snapped.

"Good afternoon, Madame Plantagenet."

"My name ain't Plantagenet," she said; "just you clear out of here."

"Beg pardon," politely said Bob, following in Jimmy's tracks, "I thought you were."

"You're a brassy little liar!" declared Miss Dobbs, who was already feeling sorry for having insured her life. "If yer don't get out I'll pour hot water all over you."

"Madame Plantagenet," began Bob.

Miss Dobbs seized a broom.

"You can't play that trick on me twice," she shouted, bringing the broom down on Bob's head.

"Oh, you go bury yourself!" growled Bob, dodging.

"I'll bury you," retorted she, using the broom with decided success on his back.

"Get out, you red-headed old catastrophe!" shouted Bob, climbing down the path.

Just then an ugly-looking dog of a conundrum breed poked his head around the corner of the house.

"Go for him, Grip!" yelled she. "I'm a red-headed old catastrophe, am I?"

"You're a bow-legged triangle," assured Bob, as he flew away.

With a growl the dog bounded after him.

Jimmy was standing up in the wagon watching the race with great interest.

"How much am I bid for first choice, gentlemen?" he cried, after the manner of a pool-seller. "Five to one on the dog, and no takers."

It seemed so.

"Go it, Grip. Bite the little whelp's legs," grimly encouraged Miss Dobbs.

"Jimmy, please get a gun and shoot that toothless effigy on the stoop," pleaded Bob, putting in his best licks.

Grip was on his heels.

Grip made a wild attempt to jump onto Bob's back and tear the skin off.

But Bob dodged, and Grip fell head over heels.

This gave the bay an advantage which he improved.

He got into the buggy just in time.

Grip jumped and snarled and showed his fangs in disappointment.

"Nice poodle," said Jimmy.

"Agreeable lap-dog," said Bob. "Jump down his throat and strangle him."

"I've a better idea than that," said Jimmy.

From one pocket he produced a stout hook and line, which he usually carried in case of striking fishing-ponds or streams.

Then from the tin box which contained their lunch, he took a bit of corn beef.

He baited the hook with it.

And threw it down to Grip.

"Birdie want a worm?" he agreeably inquired.

Grip snapped the meat with a savage champ of his jaws.

Jimmy tightened the fishing-line, and the brute howled with pain.

"Caught a dog-fish, by Jingo!" grinned our hero.

"What are you doing with that dog?" yelled Miss Dobbs.

"Fishing," responded Jimmy. "Bob, start the equipage."

Bob touched the whip to the horse, and Jimmy tied his end of the line to the back of the seat.

Off they went, the dog being pulled along, biting and snarling in the dust behind them.

"Good-bye, Lady Hamilton!" shouted Jimmy, standing up in the seat and waving his hat. "We'll send your dog back by mail."

They went around the bend in the road and out of sight before they heard Miss Dobbs' reply.

After a little they stopped.

"I'll let the poor devil loose," said Jimmy, cutting the line.

Without even a growl, Grip put his tail between his legs and started for home.

"There will be a nice quiet Sunday-school circus for a cent when they try to get the hook out of his mouth," laughed Jimmy.

That night, after a brisk drive of about fifteen miles, they put up at a small town called Kingsville.

They stopped at a tavern called the "Minnehaha," presided over by a fat and good-natured German, named Blitzer.

Jimmy wanted to be woke up at six o'clock.

"Will you wake me?" he said, to Blitzer.

"Yaw," responded the Teuton, "I will give you an alarm clock."

"That will do," said Jimmy.

He took the clock and went to his room.

Bob occupied one next to it, connected by a door between.

Jimmy set the alarm to ring at six o'clock, and piled into bed.

Bob did not.

It occurred to him that a glass of lager as a night-cap would prove the "proper caper" before going to repose.

He went down into the bar-room. Blitzer was alone.

He had half a dozen clocks, similar to the one he had given Jimmy, set out on the bar, and was looking ruefully at them.

"Making a collection?" asked Bob.

"Collection pe fammed! I vas stuck!"

"On what?"

"Dese tam glocks!"

"Get them for a philopene present?"

"Nein; dey vos a poard pill."

"Took it out in clocks, eh?"

"I dell you how it vos," confidentially explained Blitzer. "Dere vos a sheeney glock peddler come along, und he poarded mit me seven weeks for nix. Ven I asked him for money, he said that he vos proke, und left the glocks mit me for security, while he went away mit himself to get de money. Dat very day, he runned over a railroad drain und got kilt. Shust my tam luck."

As Bob stood looking at the array of clocks, a bright idea suddenly entered his head.

"Lend the procession to me until to-morrow morning," he said.

"Vot brocession?"

"The clocks."

"Mit blesure. Dey vos getting very monotonous mit me."

"Are they all alarm clocks?"

"Efery son mit a gun of dem."

Bob borrowed a basket and carried them up to his room after drinking his glass of beer.

He looked into Jimmy's room.

The deacon's son was fast asleep with his head and knees mixed together, boy fashion.

Bob quietly sneaked the clock off of the mantel-piece.

Taking one of the six that he had obtained from Blitzer, he set the alarm at one o'clock, and put it on Jimmy's mantel.

Then he crawled into his own bed and awaited developments.

At one o'clock the alarm went off with noise enough to awake the dead.

Jimmy rolled out of bed with a general appearance of sleepiness. "Darn that old clock, anyhow!" he grunted, making a dive for his clothes.

Of course he couldn't find but one shoe; the other had mysteriously disappeared.

Then when his shoe was found, the shoe-lace was gone, Lord knows where, and he had to tie it up with a string.

He looked out of the window. It was dark, the stars shone, and nobody was astir.

"Wonder what time they get up in this darned old town. Somebody must have stolen the sun, sure," he commented.

Bob, who was broad awake, thought it was time for him to put in his oar.

"Jimmy!" he called.

"Yes," answered Jimmy, softly swearing at his shirt, which positively refused to go on.

"What ails you?"

"Nothing."

"What the deuce are you getting up for at this hour of the night?"

"It's six o'clock."

"Six blazes!"

"I say it is."

"Oh, come off. Give me the rest in a hat."

"I say it is six o'clock."

"What have you been drinking?"

"You're too fresh," replied Jimmy; "didn't you hear the alarm?"

"Alarm be hanged!" answered Bob, "it's only one o'clock—come and look at my watch."

Jimmy did.

It was a few minutes past one.

"Well, I be soaked; I must have worked it wrong, though I could swear I fixed it for six o'clock. I'll make it all right now," he said as he went back to bed.

He was soon asleep.

Bob sneaked in and changed the time-pieces for the second time. This time he set the alarm for two o'clock.

Ring—ring—whizz—bang! it went at the appointed time.

Up jumped Jimmy.

"Seems to me I haven't slept five minutes," he declared.

This time one sock had fled.

While he was looking for it he upset a chair, which fell with about as much noise as a small brick house.

"Robbers!" bawled Bob.

"Shut up!" savagely said Jimmy, "what are you yelling about?"

"Thieves!" shrieked Bob.

"Holy smoke, will you be still?" Jimmy asked. "Get up!"

"Oh, is it you?" sleepily said Bob, pretending to be just awakening.

"Yes, it's me."

"What are you knocking down the building for?"

"For example. Come, get up."

"What for?"

"It's six o'clock."

"Jimmy, the next lunatic asylum that we stop at I'll leave you. It ain't six o'clock."

"I say it is."

"You're off of your brain. It's just two o'clock by my watch."

Jimmy had to look to be convinced.

"I'll burn the old clock up!" he vindictively declared.

"Don't. Let me see it," requested Bob. "Maybe you don't know how the old thing works."

Bob set it this time and deposited it on Jimmy's mantel. Then as soon as Jimmy succumbed to the insidious approaches of slumber he played the same old game. Three o'clock was the appointed time.

Promptly at three the alarm went off.

Jimmy bounced out of bed, struck the towel-rack, fell over it, dragged the water-pitcher to the floor, got the contents over him, and felt mad enough to cry.

"Help—burglars!" Bob howled, as well as he could from suppressed mirth, for he had heard Jimmy's racket, and conjectured its cause.

"Be still—don't wake up the whole house," said Jimmy, wringing the cold water out of his night-shirt.

"Oh, is it you?" yawned Bob.

"Yes."

"Are you up?"

"I am."

"Got the cramps?"

"Thunder—no."

"Then what are you doing? Jimmy, if a little beer affects you this way, I'd be a Murphyite and wallow in blue ribbon."

"It's six o'clock."

Bob gave vent to a groan of despair.

"Better go see a doctor the first thing in the morning," he advised.

"Why?"

"You're crazy as a loon on the subject of six o'clock."

"Tis six o'clock."

"No, sir—it's just three; Jimmy, please lock that door—I want a little sleep to-night."

Jimmy found out that it was really only the hour of three.

He picked up the innocent clock on his shelf and pitched it out of the window.

"The next man that gives me a trick alarm clock I'll kill," he declared. "That darned clock ought to get six months."

Then he crawled into bed, and, of course, slept until about eight.

Meanwhile Bob was up and dressed and returned all of his clocks to Blitzer.

"I shouldn't be surprised," cogitated Bob, as he sat on the piazza calmly whiffing a cigarette, and awaiting Jimmy's appearance, "if I didn't rather get the best of Jimmy that time!"

PART VI.

For quite awhile Jimmy was not aware of the true inwardness of the clock racket.

Not until Bob one day carelessly dropped a remark which led to its disclosure.

Of course, Jimmy was mad for awhile, but he finally declared that it was a good joke, and that Bob was now quits on the bouncer chair.

One day they struck a large town in northern Pennsylvania, which for a certain reason we will call Bangle.

It supported one newspaper.

The Bangle Bugle.

It was a great paper.

It was commonly supposed among its readers that the thrones of Europe trembled at every blast of the Bugle, and that the president was incessantly telegraphing from Washington for its advice.

Jimmy and Bob were loafing at the bar of the Bangle Hotel, when the conversation between the barkeeper and another man attracted their attention.

"So Bilber is dead?" said the man, stopping in the discussion of a rye sour.

"He kicked last night," sorrowfully said the barkeeper.

"What was the matter?"

"You know Tin-eared Jake?"

"The fellow that got lynched out in Nevada a short time ago?"

"The same chicken. He was here about a year ago, and Bilber and he was playing poker. Somehow Bilber held five aces, four in his hand and one he sat on. Tin-eared Jake just pulled out a shooter, and——"

"Holed him."

"Just so. Bilber never got over it. He got called by death last night, and had to chuck up his hand."

"It's too bad," reflectively said the barkeeper's friend: "he was a good writer, though he flung a nasty pen sometimes. Who will old Jones get for editor of the Bugle now?"

"Darned if I know," responded the barkeeper, silently drinking a lemonade to Bilber's memory.

A sudden idea entered Jimmy's fertile brains.

He carelessly asked the barkeeper where old Jones, the proprietor of the Bugle, could be found.

He was told.

He sauntered out to the Bugle office.

A shock-headed, phenomenally dirty boy sat in the front office intelligently doing nothing.

"Halloo, young Crusoe," pleasantly asked Jimmy, "is the gay and festive boss of this picnic ground in?"

"Hey?" gasped the boy.

"Is that old crow-sparrow of a Jones at home?" continued Jimmy.

"What?" gurgled the boy.

"You'd make a darned good Mexican idol," said Jimmy. "It's a wonder that they don't stuff you and put you up as an ornament for the shebang! Is Mr. Jones here?"

"Right there," answered the boy, indicating a back office with "Private" on the door.

"Good boy; if you only live long enough you'll make a good guide-post," said Jimmy, walking back to the private office.

He knocked at the door.

"Who's there?" asked a gruff voice.

"Me!" Jimmy replied.

"Who in the devil are you?"

"That's just what I'm trying to find out."

The door opened quickly.

A bald-headed, red-mustached man, with a big chew of tobacco in his mouth, stuck his head out.

"What do you want?" he asked.

"Mr. Jones."

"That's me."

"Boss of the Bangle Bugle?"

"Yes."

"I understand you have lost your editor?"

"Of course. The darned fool up and died without leaving a bit of copy."

"Do you want a new one?"

"Where is he?"

"Right here."

Jones surveyed Jimmy from top to bottom.

"You might make a good edition of a cigarette paper," he said "Have you any experience?"

"Been stabbed twice, divorced once, clubbed frequently; can drink, smoke, fight and swear, and have served two terms in the penitentiary," answered Jimmy.

"Come in and take a chair—you may do," Jones answered.

They had a long talk.

The result was that Jimmy was engaged for a week on trial, as a sort of assistant.

For two days Jimmy got along splendidly.

He had all of the superb cheek necessary to a newspaper man.

On the third day Jones came to him with a list of "Deaths" for insertion in the Bugle.

"Grimes," he said, "how are you on poetry?"

"I wrote 'Beautiful Snow,' sir," modestly Jimmy returned.

"Like blazes. Really, can you grind out verse?"

"Machine style; why?"

"Here are a lot of death notices. Now I thought that you might write up a few suitable lines on each. Something you know that would sort of rake the heart-strings of the deceased friends, and sell some extra copies of the paper."

"All right," replied Jimmy. "Give them to me."

They were handed over.

Jimmy went to work.

A spirit of mischief took possession of him, and he burlesqued the whole thing.

It happened that Jones did not look over Jimmy's copy. It went into the paper just as it was written.

At last the Bugle came out.

That morning Jones started down to the office, smoking a good cigar and feeling at peace with all the world.

Copies of the Bugle were everywhere.

Even the town bootblack was sitting on his box, eagerly reading a paper.

"Wonder what the deuce has made it sell so?" reflected Jones.

He was not long left in darkness.

A stout gentleman, robed in black, grabbed him by the collar.

"You infernal scoundrel!" roared the stout gentleman, "what in thunder do you mean, sir?"

"Hey?" gasped the astonished Jones.

"You sacrilegious idiot!" continued the other, "you ought to be clubbed."

"What is the row?" asked Jones, with half an idea that he was in the presence of a madman.

"Read that."

Jones took the proffered Bugle.

Under the usual heading, he read this beautiful verse:

"Little Willie Punkey
Had a painted monkey
Riding on a stick;
Little Willie Punkey
Sucked the painted Monkey
Made him very sick;
Doctors were in vain,
Medicine was too late;
The hearse will call for Willie
To-morrow at eight."

Oh, Lord!" cried Jones, "that's an infernal outrage."

"Of course it is," said the other. "You ought to be tarred and feathered. Read next."

Jones read.

It ran like this:

"Mr. Pepper's mother-in-law
Will forever hold her jaw;
Her friends will wail and holler,
Death did her collar,
She left many a dollar—
Funeral at twelve—no cake."

"This is awful," poor Jones panted.

"Of course. Was you drunk when you wrote it?"

"I never wrote it."

"Who did?"

"A young devil I hired as an assistant."

"He will probably assist you to state's prison. Listen to this one:

"Bill Sykes' wife
Has left this life,
She's kicking at the gate of heaven;
She had an awful pain
In the region of her brain,
Physicians were in vain;
The procesh will start promptly at seven."

"And Bill Sykes is the baddest man in town. He'll kill me sure," said Jones.

He grabbed the paper and started for the Bugle office, determined to murder Jimmy.

Before he had gone half a block, a brick took his hat off.

"Who did that?" he shouted, with a white face, stopping to pick up his dicer.

"Me," responded a rough voice: "I aimed it for your empty old skull. Think it's darned funny ter make fun of a feller losing a little gal, don't yer?"

Jones looked around.

A rough-looking chap in a red shirt and a slouch cap, and a

wicked bull-dog at his heels, stood hesitating with a second brick in his hand.

"Put a lot of stuff in yer blarsted old Bugle about my brother's little gal, will yer? 'Tain't none of yer bizness if she died."

"What is the matter?" asked Jones.

In response, the brick-heaver produced a disreputably dirty paper, and read:

"Jake Shyder's gal kid,
Up above has slid,
While skipping in the skipping rope.
The rope is now for sale,
She'll be planted in a vale,
And the mocking bird will whistle sweet, we hope."

"I've got a durned good mind to smash yer nose way inter yer ears," threatened Mr. Shyder's brother.

Jones explained the best way that he could.

The bereaved uncle was but partially mollified, however.

"I'm going off to get a drink," he said; "mebbe I'll get chock stinking boiling full. If I do I'll come down to your durned old office with a gang, and start an earthquake in the old shebang. Savvy."

Meanwhile, Jimmy was rather astonished at the unexpected result of his essay as an obituary poet.

He did not get down to the office till late.

The boy who had appeared on the day that he first went there was at his post, dirtier than ever, if possible.

"Well, Julius Caesar," said Jimmy, "how's things?"

The boy grinned all over.

"There's been gangs here this morning," he said.

"Gangs of what?"

"Folks."

"What did they want?"

"To see the editor. Some of them had clubs."

"Clubs?"

"Yes, and knives."

"Phew!"

"And pistols."

"Nice folks."

"And one big nigger with a razor."

"Lucky I wasn't in," said Jimmy. "I say, young Lochinvar!"

"Yes, sir."

"If any one calls, tell them I've gone to Greenland's icy mountains. Do you hear?"

The boy smiled intelligently, and Jimmy retreated into the private office and locked the door.

"As a poet, I'm afraid I am N. G."

Presently the boy outside gave a signal of warning.

"Nother one," he said to Jimmy, as he looked down the stairs.

"Nother what?"

"Man."

"Who is it?"

"Dunno. Guess he's got a shooter."

"Good-bye," answered Jimmy, locking his door.

Soon a choleric-looking gentleman entered.

In his hand he bore a Bangle Bugle.

"My name is Fitts," he announced definitely to the office boy.

"I h'ain't got no objections," answered the boy, who had stumbled upon the phase in a fit of inspiration and was proud of it.

"Where is he?" asked Fitts.

"Where's who?"

"The editor."

"Gone to Greenland's icy mountings."

"Gone to blazes."

"No he ain't. He's gone to Greenland's icy mountings."

"What for?"

"Ter push icebergs."

Mr. Fitts seized the lad by the collar and flung him violently across the room.

"Take that, you sassy cub," he growled. "Learn better manners. Hark ye, sir, did you write this?"

"Write what?" the boy asked, clambering up and finding to his delight that he was dirtier, if possible, than ever.

"This unholy-verse, written on the demise of my youngest nephew."

Assuming an attitude of insulted and outraged dignity, Mr. Fitts read in a stentorian voice:

"Little Peter Gruger
Fell into the fire;
He burnt up his little checkered frock:
He wasn't long sick,
But died like a brick,
And he's stopp'd short like grandfather's clock."

"That is a deliberate insult to the best feelings of the human heart!" declared Fitts.

"Oh, go hire a hall," said the boy, edging towards the door.
 "I shall take a chair and stay here till the editor gets back, and then, sir—then, sir, there will be blood on these walls," threatened Fitts.

"Yer better git a porous plaster an' tack it over yer mouth," said the boy, as he made a rush for the stairs.

He had got half way down when he met three men coming up. They did not seem to be ambassadors of peace.

Rather otherwise.

There was a black look in their eyes, and an ugly swing of their shoulders that signified war.

One of them collared the boy.

"Let go of me," he snarled.

"Do you belong upstairs?" asked the man.

"Yes."

"In the Bangle Bugle?"

"Yes; let go of me. I ain't done nuffin'."

"Is the editor in?"

A happy thought struck the boy. An idea of mischief and retaliation combined.

"The editor is up-stairs," he said.

"Where?"

"In a chair. But I say."

"Hurry!"

"He's skeart. There will be lots of folks in to-day a-wantin' to kill him for somethin' that he put inter the Bugle."

"I believe it."

"He won't give himself away. He'll say he ain't the editor. Don't you believe it. He gave me the sack this mornin' an' I'm going to get square on him."

The man released his hold and smiled grimly.

"We'll 'get square' for you," he remarked.

"Will yer slug him?"

"Rather."

The men proceeded up-stairs.

The boy proceeded down.

In the door he met Jones.

"Don't go up, Mr. Jones," said he.

"Why not?"

"There's going to be a killing," and he proceeded to give a highly colored romantically-tinged account of the events of the morning.

It is needless to say Jones did not go up.

Instead, he retreated to a near-by hotel, went in the back way, and securely fastened himself into a room, devoting the rest of the day to vigorous swearing, and plans for the assassination on sight of Jimmy.

Meanwhile the three men had entered the room.

Mr. Fitts was sitting bolt upright in the chair.

"Are you the editor?" asked the foremost of the new arrivals.

"No, sir," blurted Fitts.

"You ain't?"

"No."

"You're a liar!"

Mr. Fitts started up and got red in the face.

"Wha—what?" stammered he.

"You're a liar," repeated the other; "you are the editor of this blasted Bugle, and you're a dirty coward."

"You're another!" said Fitts.

"I am, eh?" quietly replied the man. "Sock it to him, boys."

Then they made a combined attack on poor Fitts. They got him down, poured ink and mucilage into him, and kicked him.

"You ain't the editor, are you?" grimly said one.

"Leave go of me!" cried Fitts, struggling to escape his tormentors; "I tell you I ain't got nothing to do with the cussed paper!"

"What are you doing here?"

"Waiting for the editor."

"Tell that to the marines."

"But I say I am," persisted Fitts. "My name is Fitts."

"I don't care if it is spasms."

"I came down here to chastise the editor myself."

"Taffy on a rail. Go for him again, boys!"

Fitts, with an agility that would have done credit to a harlequin, bounded over a chair and got behind the table.

"Keep off, miscreants!" shouted he. "I carry a revolver. By heavens! I will shoot you all! I reiterate that my name is Fitts. I am a peaceable citizen in the hardware business. I came down to this den of iniquity to see about a scandalous verse that was published relative to a relation of mine."

The three men gazed at one another.

"Maybe we have made a mistake," said one.

"If so, we are sorry," said the second.

"So am I," ruefully remarked Fitts, gazing disconsolately at his mussed clothes and bedaubed person.

"Do you know where the real editor is?" queried one of the three.

"A dirty-faced cub told me he had gone to Greenland's icy mountains," replied Fitts, "but I believe it is a lie."

"What sort of a boy told you so—did he have a pug nose?"

"Yes."

"Big mouth?"

"Correct."

"Looked like an escaped pen-wiper, thoroughly used?"

"Exactly."

"Then, by Jove! he was the one we met on the stairs. He told us that you were the editor, and that—"

Here the speaker was checked by an interruption.

The door flew open, and the very boy of whom they were speaking rolled into the room.

PART VII.

The boy rolled into the office.

He had been listening from the outside, and in his anxiety to hear all the conversation had leaned too heavily against the door.

The result was that it gave way and tumbled him unexpectedly into the room.

There was a grand rush made by all hands.

"Kill him!"

"Throw him out of the window!"

"Break a wall with him!"

"Kick his head off!"

Thus yelled his dupes as they went for him.

It seemed doubtful for a few moments if the dirty youth could survive the universal mauling that he received and come out whole.

They wiped off the floor with him, and tossed him up to the ceiling, dragging him over the tables and put his head in a spittoon.

Then they kicked him down and walked over him and had lots of fun with him.

At last he succeeded in escaping from their clutches and gaining a temporary retreat behind the table.

"What hev I done?" he demanded. "I'll git my crowd down here an' lick the hull lot of yer."

"What have you done?" asked Fitts; "look at me! What do I look like?"

"A chromo of misery," replied the dirty youth. "What did I ever do to you?"

"You got me assaulted," said Fitts.

"Who did?"

"You did!"

"How?"

"You said I was the editor of the Bugle."

"I didn't. 'Twas my twin brother. He is allus a-gettin' me in musses. He looks jess like me!"

"See here, young fellow, that taffy won't do," sternly said one of the other men. "Tell us where the real editor is, or I'll cut your throat!"

"In the offis," replied the dirty youth, changing his tune.

Four men never got into an office quicker than those four men did into Jimmy's sanctum.

True, it was locked.

But they broke the door down in a flash.

Probably you will imagine they took Jimmy out and scalped him.

They didn't.

For a very simple reason.

Jimmy wasn't there. An open window and a drain-pipe running along the side of the building to the ground showed how he had escaped.

Disappointed in a human victim, the visitors got square on the office.

They left it a scene of wreck and ruin, looking worse than a free-and-easy after a general fight.

Jimmy and Bob left the town that night, Jimmy perfectly satisfied with his success as a newspaper man.

The next place that they struck was Kinstonlin, an interior town.

It was a big place.

It consisted of three or four houses and a tree. When they grew another tree they intended to start a horse railroad.

They stopped at the only hotel in the place, and after quite a successful canvass of the surrounding houses, returned to the hotel at night.

There was a particularly fresh countryman in the bar-room. His name was Jeems Hobbs, and he had just been on a visit to Philadelphia.

Probably it was the first time that he had ever been away from his mother's apron-strings in his life, for he was chuck-full of his visit.

"Didn't I see you chaps in Philadelphia?" he asked of our heroes.

"Where?" politely asked Jimmy.

"Philadelphia."

"Is it a boat?"

"Dern it, no—it's a city."

"Philadelphia?" mused Jimmy. "Bob, did you ever hear of such a place?"

"Is it down on the map?" queried Bob.

Jeems looked at them in perfect surprise.

"Gosh dern it," said he, "I thought everybody knew of Philadelphia. Did you come from New York?"

"New York," repeated Jimmy. "Where's that? Seems to me the name is familiar."

"Wal, I'll be jiggered if it h'ain't funny. Where do you hail from?"

"I come from Eutopia, Scotland, and my friend is a Brazilian from Greenpoint," soberly answered Jimmy. "What did you do in Philadelphia?"

The rustic grinned all over.

"I smoked all of the time," he said.

"Really?" said Jimmy.

"Honest Injun—right in the street. Gosh dern it, what would the folks to hum have said tu see me?"

"You're tough, you are," said Jimmy, admiringly.

"That ain't all," went on Jeems; "I got tu drinkin'."

"You are a thoroughbred."

"Rather. An' I didn't drink lemonade, neither."

"You didn't?"

"I guess not. Went right inter a gin-mill, an' took whisky. Drank seventeen."

"Lord, give the bad man air!" remarked Bob.

"Yes," continued Jeems, "I was pretty drunk. I got a cavortin' up."

"Is there a chromo goes with that word?"

"That's ere's a durned expressive word. I larned it at spellin' school. Wal, I got cavortin' up. I went into a beer saloon."

"No slouch about you."

"Not much. Called for a whiskey sour."

"Didn't the bar keeper hide under the counter, and tell you the place was closed? I'd thought he would have been afraid of you."

"He was. I went to work and smashed the tables."

"Phew!"

"Busted up the whole business, and it took sixteen policemen ter lug me off to jail."

"How many?"

"Twenty-three."

Jimmy ordered drinks right away.

"How many policemen did you say took you to jail?" he asked, after a few minutes.

"Thirty," replied Jeems, "and gosh derned big fellers at that."

And he strutted around the room as consequentially as a turkey cock, relating rudely artistic fairy legends of his Philadelphia adventure.

"What do you think of his rustic nibs?" asked Bob, in an aside to Jimmy.

"He's very gauzy," was the reply.

"Fearfully transparent."

"He's all wind."

"Can't we work a racket on him? He needs salting very badly."

"Bet I insure his life!"

"Insure your grandmother's cat!"

"I'll do both. Come up into my boudoir."

"That's a healthy old name to call a room that hasn't any carpet, and is elegantly and palatially furnished with a three-legged stove and a broken winded looking-glass," Bob laughed.

Arriving up at his room, Jimmy opened a closet.

A miscellaneous lot of rusty muskets, old-fashioned horse-pistols, and a couple of cavalry swords were revealed. The whole assortment was probably worth about seventy-five cents.

"What's this—a Fenian Headquarters?" Bob asked.

"No," said Jimmy, "it seems there used to be a military company in this place. This company got down to one man and a dog, and they disbanded. The boss of this hostelry was left in charge of the arms, and he fired them into this closet."

"But what have we got to do with them? They ain't worth stealing."

Jimmy bent down and whispered a few words into Bob's ear.

Bob grinned, nodded an assent with his head, and went downstairs.

Presently he returned.

"All right, Country will be with us soon," he answered.

"Get on your duds," ordered Jimmy.

The boys made a lively attack on the contents of the old closet.

Soon they were arrayed in a belt bristling with swords and pistols, and each carried a big musket over his shoulder.

"Hurrah for the Mulligan Guards. I look like Ned Harrigan," said Bob.

"You haven't the Hart to say so," replied Jimmy. "No bouquets, please."

"If I was Wild enough to say that, I'd grow Gray," put in Bob. "Diamond rings gladly accepted."

Just then a rap at the door interrupted their puns.

"Here is the sacrifice," said Bob. Then aloud:

"Come in."

Jeems appeared in response.

He gazed in open-mouthed wonder at the two warriors before him.

"Gosh dern it, what are yu up to do?" he asked.

Quick as a cat Jimmy slipped behind him and locked the door.

"What's that for?" Jeems inquired, noticing the action.

"Take a chair," sternly responded Jimmy.

"I—I guess I'll go hum; it's time to milk the keows."

"You have milked your last milk. Sit down, Jeems!"

"But dad."

"You'll never see dad again. Sit down, Jeems."

"Gosh dern it, I won't!"

Jimmy calmly leveled the musket at his head.

"If you don't sit down you will go out of here with holes enough in you for a first class sieve. Sit down, Jeems."

Jeems, trembling, sat down on a chair.

Bob sidled up to him.

"Take care," he said.

"What does all this mean?" whispered Jeems.

"He's crazy."

"Who?"

"My friend."

"Ain't yu, tu?"

"No; but I've got to humor him; you must too."

"Stand on your head!" sternly ordered Jimmy of Jeems.

"I—I cannot."

"You must."

"Stand on your head," whispered Bob. "He's killed sixteen men in Gowanus, Kentucky, for refusing to do it."

Jeems got up and made the attempt.

"It was a beautiful failure. He lost his balance and fell over with a crash."

"Oh, Lord," he said, "I've broken my head."

"There's nothing into it to break," consolingly answered Jimmy.

"Sit down, Jeems."

Poor Jeems obeyed.

Jimmy produced a stout rope, found in the closet, and secured his unfortunate victim.

"On yonder burning prairie," called out Jimmy, "I had a brother, a lovely boy. His hair was of the color of the red—red rose, and he walked six ways of a Sunday. But in the night the starry-eyed galoots came and tore his reeking head from his fair young scalp."

"Jewhillikens!" ejaculated Jeems, with his eyes wide open.

"I swore a terrible sware upon the altars of my grandfather's socks to be revenged. For seven centuries I was the terror of the blind alleys; I burned houses, killed defenseless women, ate little children, and revenged my bre-uther. Ha—ha! clayfoot! did I not?"

"I calkerlate so," faintly responded Jeems.

"You're a liar! Take that!" yelled Jimmy, in his natural tone, as he upset chair and Jeems on to the floor.

Bob picked him up.

"I'll cut you loose," he whispered, "and we'll go for him."

"You do it, and I'll holler," was the brave gawk's reply.

"I thought you said it took forty policemen to carry you to the station-house in Philadelphia?"

"Twas only one—an' he was lame," confessed Jeems.

"You're a pork-fed liar, that's what you are!" Bob rejoined in disgust. "Now he can kill you if he wants to."

"I want you to insure your life," Jimmy said to the brave, had, tough man in the chair.

"What for?" he asked, with a white face.

"For the benefit of your children."

The rustic actually blushed.

"I h'ain't married," he simmered.

"Well, do it for your parents."

"They're sick. Dad's got most twenty dollars hung up in ma'am's stocking behind the chimney. 'Sides, I don't want to die."

The boys dropped their muskets, and grabbed several additional swords and pistols.

Then they performed a wild war-dance around him.

"Country squash must di-yi!" whooped Jimmy, in Indian style.

"Shoot him head off—off!" chorused Bob.

"Cow-milker will be no more!"

"He goes to the happy hunting-ground!"

"His squaw will cry!"

"His kids will weep!"

"For him they'll sigh!"

"We'll plant him deep!"

"Now give it to him. Three minutes for prayers and two for the funeral!" said Jimmy, waving his life insurance book aloft.

"Help!" Jeems roared.
 "Another word, and be Heavens ye die!" declared Jimmy. "Will you insure your life?"

"For how much?"

"Fifty thousand."

"Gosh dern it, I hain't stole nobody's body."

"You ain't got to pay it," explained Jimmy. "Just sign your name to this policy."

"I don't want to."

"All right. Prairie hen roost on hayseed's grave before break of day!" began Jimmy, Indian style, as he flourished his pistol.

"Hold on!" interrupted Jeems; "I'll sign it; gosh dern it, I'll sign anything."

Jimmy whipped out a lead pencil.

"Lead pencil signatures are good in law," he said. "Put it down in the book. Jeems."

With a trembling hand Jeems signed his name in a caligraphy which resembled a Virginia rail fence on a staggering drunk.

"Another victim," cheerfully commented Jimmy.

"Now let me go," pleaded Jeems.

"Couldn't think of it," answered Jimmy. "You're mad now, and if you went out you might tear up the whole village. You're such a tough, you know."

"I hain't," wept Jeems.

"But you said so."

"I waz lyin'. Lemme go home."

"Didn't you drink while you were in Philadelphia?"

"Nuthen but ginger-pop."

"Then you must be punished for falsehood," calmly said Jimmy; "good-bye."

"Where you goin'?" asked Jeems.

"Off."

"You hain't goin' ter leave me tied in this cheer?"

"Bet that way every time, Jeems, and you'll be right. Tra-la-la—sweet dreams. We shall meet beyond the river—by and by—by and by!" sang Jimmy, as he and Bob scooted out of the room, locked the door on the outside, paid their bill, and skipped out of the town lively.

Next day, at a tavern some miles away, they read in a country paper of the terrible outrage which had been perpetrated upon "our esteemed fellow-citizen, Jeems Hobbs, by two young scoundrels," and it intimated that "the lynx-eyed sheriff," Jim Godey, was on their track.

At first Jimmy paid no attention to the notice.

He and Bob only laughed at it. But there was to be a ludicrous sequel to their adventure.

The next morning, as they were yet in bed, a rap came at the door.

"What is it?" Jimmy asked, sleepily.

"A gent wants to see you."

"Who is he?"

"The sheriff."

"Tell him to sit on himself till I get ready to get up," dozingly answered Jimmy.

The porter at the door pattered down-stairs only to return in a few seconds.

"He's got a warrant for you, gentlemen," said the porter.

"Who has? Darn it, will you let a chap sleep?"

"The sheriff," monotonously repeated the porter. "What have you been up to?"

These words awakened Jimmy.

Recollections of the paragraph in the paper came back to him at once.

He woke Bob up.

"We'll look gay and festive squinting over iron bars," he said. "Maybe we'll get our pictures put in the papers as distinguished criminals."

"What the deuce is the row?" Bob wanted to know.

"We're collared."

"What for?"

"Our circus with 'Sit down, Jeems.'"

"Who by?"

"The sheriff."

"Where is he?"

"Downstairs."

"Can't we skip?"

"Nixey. Jim; no way but the window—and it's too far from the ground. Get up and dress."

Bob obeyed.

Both of them began putting on their clothes. Somehow the humor seemed to have all oozed out of their escapade of two days before.

"Fine ending to our trip," growled Bob. "Probably we'll get sixty days. Nice news for the folks at home."

"Oh, brace up," said Jimmy, who had recovered all his composure. "I'll bet you sixty dollars to a tin rooster that we get out of this."

"How?"

"Ten cents for first correct solution; I'll be darned if I know; but we'll get clear nevertheless."

"I wish I had your cheek," enviously sighed Bob, as they went downstairs. "It used to be brass once, but it's bronze now."

"Small compliments gratefully received," answered Jimmy, as gaily as if he was going to find a fortune, instead of a sheriff, downstairs.

They went in the parlor.

A thick-set man, with a heavy black mustache, stood by the door puffing a cigar.

"That's our onion," whispered Jimmy.

So it proved.

The black mustached man threw away his cigar and advanced toward them.

"Young gentlemen," said he, "I arrest you in the name of the law."

PART VIII.

"Who the deuce is law?" asked Jimmy. "Don't know his nibs."

"This is no joking affair, young gents," said the sheriff, gravely.

"What are we arrested for?" Jimmy asked, Bob remaining silent.

"For assault and battery."

"Who on?"

"Jeems Hobbs."

"The bold, bad country squash who paralyzed Philadelphia?"

"I don't know nothing about that. He is a young fellow in our town. I got instructions to serve the warrant, and I followed you here."

"You're all right," said Jimmy. "You only did your duty. When do we go back to your village?"

"By to-night's train."

"Then why didn't you wait and arrest us to-night?"

The detective smiled a sagacious smile.

"I was afraid you might skip," he said. "I ain't no sardine, I know you Yorkers. You're slippery cusses."

"No use trying to fool you," replied Jimmy.

"Not much," answered the sheriff, evidently satisfied with this tribute to his ability.

"I suppose you will let us have breakfast," went on Jimmy.

"Oh, yes, I'll eat with you. Business is business, you know."

They passed through the bar-room into the dining hall.

The barkeeper, a good-natured young fellow, stood near the door.

"If I can do anything for you, let me know," whispered he to Jimmy.

"There's one friend, and a good one, too," silently reflected Jimmy to himself.

They ate their breakfast in company with the sheriff.

He was not a bad fellow.

But he had an inordinate belief in his own sharpness, and he talked continually of it.

Such a man as this is always easy to outwit.

Before the breakfast was through Jimmy had formed his plan of escape, and at the same time play a ludicrous joke on the sheriff.

After finishing the meal he offered his captor a cigar.

He took it cautiously.

"Anything in it?" he asked.

"Tobacco," laughed Jimmy.

"Tain't drugged?"

"Nixey. Give it to me—I'll smoke it."

"You needn't mind," replied the sheriff, lighting it. "Just want to let you know that I'm fly."

Presently Jimmy proposed a stroll around the town.

"Hang it," he said, "if we're going to be locked up to-morrow, I think you ought to give us a show at some fresh air to-day."

After a moment's hesitation the sheriff consented.

First, however, he made them promise not to run away.

Jimmy called to the barkeeper.

"Two flasks of Rhine wine," he ordered.

"What will you have, sir?" to the sheriff.

"A leetle whisky is good enough for me," he answered.

He turned to throw the butt of his cigar out of the window.

Now was Jimmy's chance.

"Doctor the whisky," he whispered, almost inaudibly, to the barkeeper.

"All right," responded the other in as low a tone, as he went out to execute the order.

He came back with three flasks and a light lunch in a small wicker basket.

The boys, with the sheriff at their heels, strolled about the town all the morning.

Toward noon they edged out into the surrounding country, and sat down to lunch.

The boys took a light draught of wine.

The sheriff took a copious draught of whisky. It was drugged,

as we said before. Not in a way calculated to harm any one, but its intoxicating power was increased ten-fold.

Before long the swig that the sheriff had taken began to tell on him.

"You're jolly good fellows," he remarked. "Perfect gemmen."

"You bet," answered Jimmy. "Let's have another drink."

It was taken.

The sheriff grew more sociable.

"Yer 'mind me of my brozzer," he said, his speech getting a little confused as he looked at Bob.

"Where is your brother?" asked Bob.

"He disgrashed the family."

"How?"

"He's a—hic—Congressman. Bet yer half a dollar I can—hic—stand on my head."

"Bet you can't."

"Wash me and see. But I shay, no running away. Recklect, you're my prisoners."

"We won't."

The sheriff's attempt to stand on his head was a gilded and ornamented failure. He got into a crab-like position on one shoulder, and then ignominiously rolled over on his back.

"Didn't I do it?" he asked.

"Bully!" replied Jimmy.

"I'm a—hic—son-of-er-gun at gym—gym—gym—f'get ther rest. Bet I can turn er—hic—double summersault over yer heads."

The experiment promised to be so hazardous that Jimmy respectfully declined to have anything to do with it.

"Les' have nozzer drink—wiz me, this time," the sheriff said. "R'klect, boys, I ain't tight. It's them—hic—mountain breezes. Don't try to run away."

The boys repeated their promise, and a third drink was taken. It caused the sheriff's humor to suddenly change.

He glared ferociously at Bob.

"Don't yer dare wiggle your—hic—nose at me!" he said.

"Who's doing so?" asked Bob, in complete surprise.

"You are. I don't 'low nobody to—hic—wiggle their nose at me. 'Pologise!"

Bob did.

"I'm a whooping wild-cat!" announced the sheriff, fiercely kicking the lunch-basket.

"A howling canary bird!" added Jimmy.

"Yesh, sir. R'lect, I'm a bad nigger in a fit. Wanter fight, anybody? I kin lick anybody that stands in boots in this ere—hic—dirty town for five cents. Don't yer wanter get—hic—licked, boys?"

Both the boys disclaimed their desire that way.

"Do it—hic—for three cents. The both of you."

The boys passed again.

"Do it—hic—for a penny?" pleaded the sheriff, striking wildly at a passing fly, and upsetting himself with great grace.

The boys picked him up.

"Who—hic—knocked me down?" he queried. "Show him to me till I—hic—par'lyze him."

"Nobody hit you."

"Where is he?"

"Where's who?"

"That zere Nobody. Knock the whole roof of his—hic—head off."

"Oh, sit down," urged Bob, sitting the sharp official of the law on a stump.

Much to their astonishment, the intoxicated gentleman produced two big pistols from some portion of his clothes.

He pointed them carelessly at the boys.

"What did I—hic—arrest you for?" he asked.

"Arson," chaffed Jimmy.

"You—hic—lie!"

"What were we arrested for?"

"For—hic—murder."

"Who did we murder?"

"Respect'ble ole colored lady. Killed her with a—hic—hic—axe. Didn't you?"

"Sure."

"Buried her—hic—body in zer—hic—hen-house?"

"No; in the back yard."

"All ze same. Are you guilty or not guilty?"

"Guilty," answered Jimmy, bent on humoring him.

The sheriff coolly cocked his pistol.

"Yer confess yerself guilty," he said. "Guess had better kill ye right off, an' shave ze State a s-pensive trial."

Here was an unforeseen dilemma. The man was just tight enough to carry his threat into execution.

But Jimmy was equal to the emergency.

"Let's take a drink first," he proposed.

"I shouldn't drink wiz—hic—mur'ers," huskily said the sheriff—"mur'ers of 'spectable ole colored lady, too. Colored lady wish—hic—twenty-six children, mosh of 'em—hic—white."

"Only one," pleaded Jimmy.

"All rightsh. Don't try to—hic—skedaddle or I'll sh-shoot yer."

Jimmy gave the required pledge, and drinks were taken.

The sheriff's volatile disposition changed again.

"Who's—hic—making an armory of me?" he asked, grinning amiably at his pistols. "Washer I want wiz these?"

"Throw them away," urged Jimmy.

With a whoop he hurled the revolvers afar off into a ditch.

"Shing us a shong," he requested of Bob.

"Can't—got a false throat."

"You shing?" to Jimmy.

"Lost my voice, and it hasn't been found yet."

"Zen," announced the sheriff, "I'll shing myself."

"Bully boy!" applauded Jimmy.

"I'm a—hic—silver-tongued shewing machine. Nightingale I—hic—mean."

"Bully for the nightingale!"

Steadying himself against a tree, the sheriff took his whisky flask in one hand and beat time to imaginary music.

"What key shall I—hic—warble on?" demanded he.

"Night-key," suggested Bob.

"Ke—no," insinuated Jimmy.

"No, sir, ze key of G."

"N. G.," laughed Jimmy. "Go ahead with the concert."

"How about the—hic—chorus?"

"We'll dig one up; go ahead."

In a voice that sounded like the carol of a chicken about to have its head cut off, the sheriff began:

"My grand'fazzer's clock was too big for zer shelf,
So it stood ninety—hic—days on ze floor;
It was taller——"

"Oh, get a gun."

"Take it out into the yard and shoot it," requested Bob.

The sheriff, like the famous clock, stopped short.

"Ain't that a nice—hic—shong?" he asked.

"It's too new," was Jimmy's response. "Strike up something older."

"Here goes for the—hic—cigars," the sheriff announced, steadying himself afresh and gently vocalizing:

"Tim Finnegan lived in—whazzername street?

An Irish gemman, mighty odd,

He'd a beautiful brogue so rich an'—an'—an'—f'get the rest,

An' to rise in the world he carried—a—f'get what,

An' Tim——"

Here the melody suddenly ceased, and the solo terminated abruptly.

The sheriff swayed from side to side, and at last lurched forward and fell upon his face.

The boys sprang to his side and tried to raise him.

His breathing assured Jimmy that he had not fallen in a fit nor was he injured.

"Paralyzed!" was our hero's brief but expressive definition of the astute official's condition.

"He is full," said Bob.

"Crammed up to the throat. He's got a regular drunken doze onto him that may last for hours," replied Jimmy.

"But what are we going to do with him?"

"Take him back to the hotel."

"Won't we get collared?"

"Leave it to me, Bobby. I'm the head engineer of this cherubic racket."

Bob gave up further questioning, and mutely obeyed Jimmy's instructions.

They consisted in moving the slumbering sheriff into a clump of bushes, screening him effectually from observation.

"I'm going back to the village," announced Jimmy. "You stay here till I come back."

"What are you going to the village for?" ventured Bob.

"To buy it, baby," tranquilly answered Jimmy, disappearing over a fence.

In about an hour Jimmy returned.

But not alone.

He arrived in a horse and wagon, and the barkeeper of the village hotel smiling by his side on the seat.

"How is the lush?" pleasantly inquired Jimmy.

"The who?" Bob asked.

"The lush; or, in other words, our friend, the Argus-eyed sheriff. Is he still attitudinizing for a sleeping beauty?"

"He's snoring like six o'clock."

Jimmy and the barkeeper, whose name, by the way, was Tom, got off the wagon, and visited the sheriff's couch.

He was still sleeping the sleep of the drunkard.

Jimmy regarded him with a mischievous twinkle in his merry blue eyes.

"Don't you think that coat is too heavy for him, Tom?" he said.

"Very much so."

"It may cause him to perspire himself away."

"Yes; we, as his friends, ought to remove it."

"The suggestion was quickly acted upon. The coat, and the vest, too, were taken off of the poor sheriff, who dozed in perfect unconsciousness."

"His shirt appears to bother him awfully," said Jimmy.

"It scratches him in the neck. It may produce a canker sore. Men have been known to die from canker sore on the neck," informed Tom, with every appearance of soberness. "I suggest we take it off."

"As members of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, I suggest that we do," proposed Jimmy.

Off came the shirt.

Bob looked on in open-mouthed wonder.

"Is this a great change act?" he queried.

"Oh, no; we're going to give our convivial friend a neat summer suit," Jimmy replied. "Get the garments out of the chariot, Tom."

Tom retreated to the wagon.

In a few seconds he reappeared on the spot, carrying a small pail of paste, a brush, and a miscellaneous assortment of small bills.

Jimmy took the brush, and gently covered the upper portion of the sheriff's body with paste.

"Going to give him a five cent shave?" Bob asked.

"No, sir; I intend making an animated billboard out of him. If you have got any patent medicine that you desire to advertise, Bob, here is a tip-top chance. Space cheap."

"Guess not!" laughed Bob. "That's a pretty way to treat a sheriff, ain't it? A real, live sheriff of a country town, too."

"I'm only decorating him," replied Jimmy, pasting a bill of somebody's patent salve onto the slumberer's breast.

"Making him a thing of beauty and joy forever," put in Tom, handing out a show-bill of SNAPS.

They stuck the poor sheriff full of all sorts of bills, until he looked worse than the Tattooed Greek.

Jimmy surveyed his work with admiration.

"He'd make a bully ornament for a picture gallery," he commented.

"If we could only teach him to squirt water artistically through his mouth, we might sell him to somebody as an imported fountain," suggested Tom.

"I think it would be better to paint his legs red and white, and let him out as a barber's pole," added Bob.

Jimmy put a few finishing touches on his work of art, and then went back to the wagon.

He dragged the bodies of what looked like two boys partially into sight.

"What in thunder are those?" exclaimed Bob.

"Stiffs," was Jimmy's reply.

"Corpses?"

"Yes."

"Where did you get them?"

"Killed 'em."

"See here, Jimmy," gasped Bob, "are you crazy?"

"Nixey, Jim."

"Then what are you giving me?"

"Stiffs in a wagon. Sorry, but I had to kill them. Twins, too, only support of a fatherless grandmother with three wooden legs."

Bob gazed at his friend as if he firmly believed that the latter had bid farewell to his senses.

"You didn't mean to do it, Jimmy, did you?" he asked, almost piteously.

"Bless me, no. Killed 'em just for fun. I'm going to start a pirate's cave around here somewhere, and I wanted a couple of skulls to lay around. Lay down there, Terry," and Jimmy punched one of the supposed corpses in the face.

Bob sprang indignantly forward.

"I don't know whether you are crazy or drunk, Jimmy Grimes," he cried, "but I won't stand still and see you treat a dead body in that style."

Jimmy laughed a merry laugh, and jumped into the wagon.

Standing on the seat, he seized the so-called dead man, one in each hand, and held them up.

They dangled loosely in the air.

"Dummies!" he shouted, in glee.

Bob took a hurried look.

It was so.

Bob felt mortified enough to eat mud the rest of his life.

"Sold, by Jove!" he acknowledged.

"Jimmy Grimes, you take the cake. I'll stand anything you say, boys. My name is Mud, and I live in the gutter. Kill me, somebody."

"Ain't them the boss dummies?" Jimmy inquired, twitching them backward and forward. "Just see how graceful they are. There's style and tone for you. Oh, they're awful mashers. They mashed all of the chickens along the road."

Sure enough they were good dummies, and resembled boys considerably.

They were stuffed with hay, adorned with old clothes, had false faces on, and fierce-looking hats cocked over their eyes.

"But what are they for?" Bob asked.

"We're going to take the sheriff home," began Jimmy.

"Yes."

"We don't want him to go alone?"

"No."

"We don't want to go with him?"

"I should smile not."

"So we're going to get him to snatch these dummies bald-headed. He's so drunk that he can't tell them from us."

Bob heartily acquiesced in the plan, and Jimmy detailed how he had crept cautiously into the village, got into the hotel by the back way, and seen Tom, hit on the dummy racket, and with Tom's ready aid fixed them up, took Tom's horse and wagon and rode back.

Toward night they bundled the sheriff, sleeping as if he intended to outrival Rip Van Winkle, into the wagon, placed the two dummies cautiously beside him, and started for Kinliston.

They drove there by the most unfrequented roads and lanes, and happily encountered no inquisitive individuals on the way.

About nine at night they reached their destination.

They drove up the main street. It was deserted, as country village streets generally are after nightfall.

But a bright light gleamed from the hotel, and the sound of voices could be heard.

"I bet there's a gang of galoots there patiently awaiting for the return of their 'Argus-eyed' sheriff and the two 'Yorkers,'" laughed Jimmy.

"We'll stop here," said Tom. "Whoa, Emma!"

The horse stood obediently still, and the boys dismounted.

They dragged the sheriff out first, rather roughly—purposely to awaken him.

They succeeded.

"Where am I?" he asked, in a dazed manner.

"Home," replied Tom, disguising his voice.

"Who in—hic—blazes are you?"

"Constable from up the road. We helped you bring the prisoners down. You got sunstruck."

"F-feel like it. Where's the prisoners?"

Jimmy and Bob yanked out the two dummies.

It was so dark where they stood, beneath the shadow of a huge tree, that the sheriff could hardly distinguish the outlines of the deceptions.

But he grabbed them each by the neck.

"Come 'long," he muttered. "What house is that over there, boys?"

"The hotel," responded Tom.

"Orright. Much—hic—bliged for yer trouble."

"That's nothing. Good-night."

"Good-night," and jumping into the wagon the boys rattled off at a lively pace.

The sheriff, half mechanically, for his brain was yet dazed with liquor, pulled his captives along.

"Yer won't walk, hey?" he vociferated at the dummies. "Got ter drag yer along, hey? Orright—you'll get another month for it. Wonder what I'm doing—hic—here, anyhow?"

He went to the hotel in a sort of half-circle.

Somehow he struck the door the first time, when in, and yanked the passive dummies behind him.

"Gentlemen," he remarked, staggering up to the bar, "I've got the young outlaws. It takes me to—hic—do it! Though I am—hic—sunstruck."

PART IX.

The deluded sheriff dragged his two dummies along amid the grins of the assembled loafers.

"Walk, why don't you?" he said, hitting one of the figures savagely alongside of the head. "'Spect that I'm a—hic—steam engine to drag you along?"

"What, have you got them, Jim? Captured a wax-work show?" asked the jovial landlord, with a smile on his rubicund visage.

"A—hic—what?"

"Wax-work show."

"Missher Bates," demanded the sheriff, with a ludicrous assumption of dignity, "do you know what you—hic—are?"

"What?"

"A crazy—hic—loon."

"Why am I?"

"Cos you are. These are my prishners. Get me a pair of handcuffs."

"You better get a wet towel, Jim," laughed a bystander.

"Whater I want of a—hic—wet towel?"

"To put on your head."

"Ain't I got a hat?"

"A fable of one. Where did you capture your prisoners?"

"Up the road. They fought like—hic—pirates."

A grand roar went up from those around at this truthful assertion.

"They look like tough nuts," asserted a man.

"B—bad," stuttered the sheriff. "C—carry pops. Had to capture them at the revolver of a—hic—loaded muzzle. Where's zer handcuffs?"

"Just hang them up on pegs," advised the landlord.

"They'll get hung up on a—hic—gallows," explained the sheriff, still gripping his charges. "Tried to—hic—kill me."

"Your life must have been in great danger," solemnly said the landlord. "Jim, I'm afraid you've got them."

"Got what?"

"Snakes!"

"Got nothin' but—hic—prishners. Stan' up straight, you villains. Most 'markable fact about these—hic—boys thash they ain't got no—hic—bones."

The crowd roared again.

"Poor Jim: Rats in garret. Too much B. W.," said the landlord.

"Wash in blazes is B. W.?"

"Bad whisky," solemnly responded the other. "Join the Murphy-ites, Jim, and swear off."

Just here Jeems Hobbs, the cause of all the racket arrived.

A breathless boy had sped down to his house and informed him that the sheriff had arrived with two prisoners.

Jeems' bosom swelled with exultation. The strong arm of the law had arisen in all its majesty and collared his tormenters.

"Those ere Yorkers thought they were tarnel cute," he said, as he hurried to the hotel, "but us hayseeds kin keep up even with them every time. Expect they won't feel so almighty funny when the squire sends them to prison."

In truth, Jeems felt a little proud of his position.

He would appear at the trial. Probably he would cut a most prominent figure at that affair.

His name would be in the county paper, and there was a chance of his picture also being presented to the public.

Therefore he felt good, and gaily waltzed into the hotel bar-room.

"Where's the sheriff?" were his first words.

"There," replied a friend, pointing to the argus-eyed individual.

"Who's he got with him?"

"Dunno. Prisoners, he says. They look to me like scarecrows."

Jeems rushed forward.

He knocked the dummies out of the sheriff's hands.

"What in thunner you doing?" demanded that gentleman.

"Wanter me to—hic—rest yo, too? Inter—hic—ferin' wiz offisher of law in discharge of his—hic—duty!"

"Where's the Yorkers?" asked Jeems.

"Have yer got—hic—eyes?" inquired the sheriff.

"Of course."

"Zen why the—hic—blazes don't you look on the floor?"

Jeems did.

There lay the two dummies, limp, and totally unconcerned.

"Do you call them 'ere big dolls Yorkers?" angrily propounded

Jeems.

"What are they?"

"Dolls."

"You're a—hic—nuzzer. Them 'ere is my prishners. Zey're tired."

Jeems felt all ready to cry. Here was a nice fix. A paralyzed sheriff with two dummy prisoners, and a bar-room full of ridiculing bystanders.

"What does it all mean?" he asked.

"It means those two boys who fooled you have got the best of the sheriff," responded the landlord.

"How?"

"I don't know. But I see that they've got Jim tight as a corned owl, and persuaded him that the two dummies were his prisoners. Probably the Yorkers are in Canada by this time. They were too smart for you, Jeems."

Jeems saw that he was left.

Like a wise man he set up liquid refreshments for the crowd.

As for the duped sheriff, they succeeded in putting him to bed by and by.

But a sicker or more disgusted man than he was the next morning it would be hard to find.

He was so chagrined that he threw up his office and went back to private life.

Meanwhile, Jimmy and Bob had been driven back to Tom's hotel. They took the midnight train, and were soon outside of hte

Quaker State.

They cut across to Delaware, the State of pretty girls and

luscious peaches, and canvassed the moral towns pretty thoroughly. All the while they were getting into scrapes of all sorts.

For instance:

One morning they stood on the depot platform of quite a large town, waiting for the train.

A very irascible old gentleman was there.

He looked as if he had been brought up on a choice diet of red peppers and powder.

He was waiting for the down train, while the boys wanted one that went the other way.

The old gent's train was behind. He fretted and fumed.

"Shameful—shameful!" he muttered, watch in hand.

"Where is he?" demanded Jimmy.

"Where's who?" growled the gent.

"Shameful."

"You're a fool," said the old gent. "What headway does that down train run on, young fellow?"

"It don't run on headway—it runs on rails," pleasantly replied Jimmy, noticing that there was quite a crowd of loungers looking on. "How long have you been out, old man?"

"Out of where?"

"Sing Sing."

"Confound your infernal impudence, young fellow, I never was in Sing Sing."

"Oh, come now, that's a nice way to go back on an old pal. Ah—ha! Scotty the Lepper, I know you."

"You—you!" yelled the old gent. "My name is——"

"Billy Dirt, and I chew ashes," jocularly finished up Jimmy. "A fine cheek you have, trying to pass yourself off into respectable society. Don't you know, Scotty, how you used to kick because you didn't have tassels on our handcuffs?"

By this time the old gent's face was the hue of a red flannel shirt.

"You confounded blackmailing scoundrel. You scandalous, vituperative——" he began.

"Yes, thanks. Just put the rest on the next load. Small compliments gratefully received," assured Jimmy. "Times have changed, Scotty, since you and I broke into a nigger church and stole the cellar. What are you now, Scotty?—faro bank, ain't it?"

The irascible old gent made a vigorous swoop at Jimmy with his uplifted carpet-bag.

But Jimmy nimbly dodged, and the carpet-bag descended upon the head of a tough nut in a collarless shirt and slouch hat.

"You bloody old skunk," roared the tough nut. "What in blank blank blazes are you doing with that blank blank old carpet-bag?"

"I—I didn't mean to hit you," stuttered the old gent.

"Old buffers like you hain't got no business goin' round by der-selves," growled the tough nut, straightening his hat. "Yer orter have a keeper."

"Insolence is the chief feature of this town," murmured the old gent.

In an instant the tough nut was on hand again.

"Insolence ain't the chief feature of this town," he said, "an' don't yer forget it! We've got a female minstrel show, an' we're goin' to have a cock-fight next week. Yer keep on wid yer sass about this town, an' I'll smack yer right in the front teeth!"

The old gent subsided.

He bottled up his wrath and started to the telegraph office to find out about the whereabouts of his train.

He was told that it was only about two hours behind, owing to a slight accident.

"Of course," grumbled the old gent. "Just my luck. Probably the depot will blow up before I get out of it, miracle if it don't."

Thus the old gent fretted and fumed as he marched up and down the platform.

At one end he spied a small stand where bolivars, candies, nuts and pies were for sale.

He stopped before it.

"What kind of pie have you got?" he asked of the boy behind the stand.

"Mince an' apple—apple an' mince—mince an' apple," monotonously repeated the boy.

"Any other kinds?"

"Yes, mince an' apple—apple an' mince—mince."

"Give me some mince," said the old gent. "This is a beautiful town. People very intelligent—remarkably smart. A man would catch the brain fever here in a day."

The old gent bought a piece.

He went and sat down on to a box at the secluded end of the depot.

"Nice pie," he sarcastically uttered; "made out of cats and gravel stones. One piece insures a toothache for a week."

Bob spied him.

"Hey, Jimmy!" he cried.

"Well, Nibsey?"

"Look at Scotty."

"Scotty who?"

"The old crank. He is doing a great American pie act."

Jimmy glanced over in the direction indicated by his chum.

"See me startle Scotty," he said.

He crept softly up behind the old gent and raised his hand.

Leveling it, he dealt him a tremendous slap on the back, which caused about half of the pie to lodge in the eater's throat.

He jumped up and cavorted around as if he was suddenly afflicted with the blind staggers.

"Ow—roo—roo!" he choked and gasped.

"Don't understand Chinese."

"Oh, gorram—gorram—" howled the old gent, getting black in the face, and doing a Terpsichorean specialty suggesting a dance with bare feet on a red-hot gridiron.

"Arabic not understood at this shop," laughed Jimmy.

"Garro—oo—wouch!" wailed the other, stamping up and down, sticking his fingers into his throat in the vain attempt to pull out the pie.

"Get a boat-hook," advised Bob.

"Or a lasso," added Jimmy.

Several persons had crowded around by this time.

"What is the matter?" asked several.

"Variety show, he'll pass around the hat in a minute," answered Jimmy. "Give him room."

The old gent shook his fist vehemently, and nodded his head to infer that Jimmy was not speaking the precise truth.

"Water," he managed to say.

A sympathizer brought a cupful.

He swallowed it, and by an immense effort, the pie with it.

"Saved by a miracle!" exclaimed Jimmy, rushing forward and grasping his hand. "Scott, old boy, let me congratulate you."

Jimmy's extra hard cheek almost took away the old gent's regained breath.

"Wha-what?" he said.

"Here is your golden chance—your golden opportunity, grip it. You have had a narrow escape from death. Get your life insured."

Out came Jimmy's book and pencil.

"So you're a life insurance agent, are you?" asked the old gent.

"Yes, sir."

"Then take that, you gallows-bird, and get that insured!" and the speaker dealt Jimmy a most artistic kick that reeled that young gentleman up against the side of the platform.

Jimmy uttered a subdued howl, and looked around.

A solemn-looking chap with a ministerial cravat, and a collar of railroad-iron stiffness, stood gazing on.

Without a moment's hesitation, Jimmy kicked him.

The solemn-looking chap doubled up like a jack-knife.

"Great heavens!" he said. "What did you do that for?"

"Pass it around," laughed Jimmy.

A sort of sepulchral grin came over the solemn-looking chap's face.

He lifted his foot—it was a good, square-shouldered, double-breasted foot, too—and delivered a regular sockdolager of a kick into the stern of the irascible old gent, who had just stooped down to tie his shoe.

The old gent keeled over as gracefully as if he was about to do a double summersault, slid along for several yards on his ear, and then rolled in front of the tough nut, who was dragging a barrow of baggage.

The tough nut fairly howled with rage.

"You blank old bald-headed lunatic, will somebody put yer into a cage?" screeched he. "Yer allus in the way. Of all the blank old nuisances you take the head!"

Picking the old gent up by the collar, the tough nut stood him on his feet.

"If yer wasn't such a bloody old idiot, I'd smash yer," he said. "Yer full, anyhow; got a still drunk onder yer. But if yer git inter my way agin, I'll kill yer if yer was a hundred years old."

The old gent recovered himself, and propounded the query:

"Who kicked me?"

"Pharaoh."

"Peter Glue."

"Billy Patterson."

"Count Johannes."

"Bessie Turner."

Such were the replies slung at him by the laughing ones around, and he didn't get a bit of satisfaction, for the solemn-looking chap had slid around to a near-by saloon, and was absently viewing life through a beer glass.

Pretty soon Jimmy's train came thundering along.

Jimmy and Bob jumped on the rear platform of the hindmost car.

Jimmy stood nonchalantly on the step as the train started slowly off.

It glided past the platform.

Standing near to the cars was the old gent, frowning yet, and asking his unanswerable riddle:

"Who kicked me?"

A thoroughly depraved and wicked idea entered Jimmy's busy brain.

"Hold on to me, Bob," he quickly said.

"What for?"

"Don't ask—watch!"

"Wonder what he's going to do now," groaned Bob, as he obediently clasped his chum.

Jimmy extended his hands and grasped the irascible old gent.

"Leave go!" he bawled.

"Hey?" asked Jimmy.

"What are you doing?" he shouted. "Leave go of me!"

"Oh, come along gently," pleaded Jimmy. "Come, crack a crib with us."

The train was accelerating its speed. Each second it was going faster.

Bobby was holding on to Jimmy. Jimmy was holding on to the old gent.

As for the last-named person, he did not have anything to hold on to.

But he wanted something.

Jimmy's grip was firm, and he was being dragged along the platform. There was strong probability that he had to descend to the locomotion of his childhood and waltz along on his hands and knees.

Generally, when anybody is traveling along in this style, they evoke ludicrous criticisms from the bystanders.

The old gent got it streaming:

"Go in, O'Leary!"

"Look at his gait. Twenty-five miles in twenty-five minutes."

"Have you got time to carry a trunk? He's a swallow. It's fly he will in a minute."

"Step lively, old 'un, and beat the train."

"Put chalk on your shoes an' you can go faster."

The old gent did not attempt to reply to these not very complimentary remarks.

He wanted to grab something.

At the end of the platform was an Irish woman, with the usual basket of cast-iron fruit.

The old gent grabbed her, and dragged her along, the apples from her basket flying into the air as she went.

By this time the conductor of the train had become aware of the racket that was in progress at the end of the train.

He rang the bell.

The engineer slowed up, and the long line of cars came to a halt. The conductor rushed back to the rear car.

"What the deuce is the row here?" he asked.

"Man wanted to get on board," quietly answered Jimmy.

"You darned old idiot," said the conductor, addressing the old gent, "you might have got killed. A man of your years ought to have had more sense."

"This young scoundrel," said the old gent, "held on to me."

"Of course I did," responded Jimmy, "you'd fell down under the wheels and got run over if I hadn't."

"I can't stand here arguing," retorted the conductor. "Six minutes behind already. Go ahead," and he waved his hand as a signal to the engineer.

Off went the train.

"By-by, Scotty!" yelled Jimmy, kissing his hand to the poor victim of his practical joke.

But the old gent did not reply.

He had his hands full again.

The Irish woman whom he had grabbed hold of was not of a lamb-like disposition.

Clutching her basket, she raised it above her head.

"Ye murderin' ould thafe of poverty!" she cried, as she fetched it down on the old gent's bald cranium. "Take that, ye fresh ould tarrier!"

And as the train swung around a curve and the depot faded from sight, the last thing that Jimmy saw was the old gent and the Irish woman fighting furiously on the platform, surrounded by an interested group of spectators.

PART X.

For about a week after the hurrah with the irascible old gent at the railway station, Jimmy and Bob met with an unexampled streak of bad luck.

Everything seemed to go against them.

Jimmy lost considerable money through having his pocket picked at Easton, and nobody wanted their lives insured.

Do what he would he could not get policies.

Instead, he got clubbings.

And vulgar language.

And grand bounces out of offices and buildings.

One man whom he had pestered almost to death actually shot at him.

As for Bob, as a book-agent, he proved a brilliant failure.

His appearance at a house seemed to be the signal for the servant girl to untie the dog and reach for the gun.

In fact, they got so completely dead broke that they had to pawn most of their wardrobe to get to Allegheny City.

They arrived there in the evening and went to the principal hotel.

Jimmy pranced boldly up to the clerk's desk.

"A suite on the parlor floor?" he demanded.

The clerk looked superciliously at the rather seedy appearance of the two chums.

"We can give you a nice hall bedroom for fifty cents," he said.

"I want the best rooms in the house," replied Jimmy. "Southern exposure, private bath, nigger at the door, and by the way," handing over a brown paper parcel carefully sealed, "please put that in the safe."

"What is it?" queried the clerk.

Jimmy looked all around.

"Diamonds!" he whispered. "I am the agent for a large firm of jewelers in San Francisco, and I am traveling to New York. Don't give it away who I am, for I have reason to suspect that I am being followed."

"We'll take care of them," said the clerk, his manner changing.

"The rooms you wish will be ten dollars a day."

"That's nothing," answered Jimmy, carelessly producing what seemed to be a large roll of bills, with an X prominent on top. "Cash in advance?"

"No hurry—no hurry," responded the clerk, growing very affable all of a sudden. "Robert!"

In response, a starched sort of a negro appeared.

"Show these gents to parlor A."

"Stop!" interposed Jimmy. "By the way, have our rooms a parlor organ?"

"Very sorry," the clerk hesitated, "but they have not."

"Or a piano?"

"No, sir."

"Not even a melodeon?"

"No, sir."

"Perhaps, Jimmy," put in Bob, "we can hire a brass band."

"Doubtless," answered Jimmy, sober as a mule. "When we were in Venice it was our custom each night to have the Duke de Mud's brass band come in gondolas and play for us each evening on the Rialto."

"Shall I send for your baggage?" respectfully queried the clerk, greatly impressed by this reminiscence of foreign travel.

Now here was a dilemma.

All of their baggage consisted of two dilapidated trunks, which looked as if they had traveled for about a year with the circus.

But Jimmy was equal to the emergency.

"We have seven or eight large packing-cases," he said, "but we've sent them right through. There's a couple of small trunks which will be here soon, though. We are only to stop here a day or so."

"All right, sir; dinner at six, sir," obsequiously said the clerk, and Robert ushered the boys into the best apartment that the hotel boasted of.

Dismissing Robert, Jimmy's first act was to bolt the door.

Then he took off his coat, lit a cigar, laid back in an easy-chair, and burst into a laugh at the comic look of dismay which rested on Bob's face.

"Making up for a funeral, Bob?" he asked, puffing at his cheroot.

"Jimmy Grimes," asked Bob, "are you crazy?"

"Nixey, Jim."

"What then do you mean by hiring the best rooms in the house when we haven't got money enough to pay for—"

"Lodgings on the roof, hey?"

"Just so. But I say, Jimmy, where did you get all the wealth?"

"That immense boodle I stupefied the clerk with?"

"Precisely."

"Bob, that boodle was a brilliant idea. Gaze upon the untold gold."

With a grin, Jimmy produced the roll.

In a minute he had betrayed its secret. It was nothing but a mass of old paper, chewing tobacco, and a pencil, neatly enveloped in a solitary ten dollar bill.

Bob's face fell.

"Then the assets of this concern are just ten dollars," he said.

"Gigantic intellect! Great arithmetical calculation!" responded Jimmy. "Right you are, my Circassian blonde, the first pop."

"But what I don't see," ruefully uttered Bob, "is how we are going to get out of this. Even the roosters seem to have their lives insured in this darned old State, and I have only found one man who could read, and he was blind and read with his fingers."

"We'll get out of it somehow, Bob. Cheek wins the day every time," complacently replied Jimmy. "Gallus rooms, ain't they?"

"Very thoroughbred."

"You're awful high-toned."

"We won't be, though, when we get fired out."

"But think of the six packing cases," laughed Jimmy. "Hanged

if I ain't anxious about them. My pink velvet ball dress, with gold lace on the legs, might get injured. What's that sign up there, Bob?"

Bob gazed up at a small gilt sign suspended on the wall.

"Meals served in rooms, fifty cents extra," he read.

"That settles it," said Jimmy, "I want my meals served in my room. It's too common eating at the public table—might sit next to a Congressman. Yank the bell-rope, Bob."

Bob mechanically obeyed.

Up came Robert.

"Quail on toast, broiled shad, sweetbreads, Vienna bread, celery, tomatoes, French peas, ice cream and a quart bottle of Piper Heidsieck," he ordered, "in the room."

Out bounced Robert.

Bob's face grew longer.

"You need a straight-jacket, Jimmy," he said. "That supper alone will make a big hole in the ten dollars."

"Recollect the diamonds in the safe, though, my dear boy!"

"What sort of a snap was that?"

"Oh, the wrapper is square enough, and so is the sealing-wax on it. But the diamonds ain't."

"What are they?"

"Cracked coal!" laughed Jimmy. "Bob, the awful responsibility resting upon me, carrying those diamonds around with me as agent for San Francisco jewelers, will bring me to the grave."

Bob wisely made no reply.

He saw that Jimmy was in one of his reckless don't-care-a-darn-for-nothing-or-nobody moods, and that remonstrance was useless.

Supper came, and the boys did it ample justice.

Afterward Jimmy went downstairs, and returned after a short absence.

Bob was sitting in the middle of the floor, looking the picture of misery, with visions of arrest for swindling, courts, jails and so forth, passing before his eyes.

"You look cheerful enough to be hung!" merrily said Jimmy.

"Put cents on your eyes, Bob, and you'll make a first-class corpse."

"Go ahead, you won't feel so terribly funny when you get arrested for defrauding a hotel," surlily answered Bob.

"There never was such a thing as a hotel," sportively said Jimmy. "This ain't a hotel, it's a menagerie. You're chief curiosity. But I say, young cranky, I've got an idea."

"Of what?"

"To get out of this fix."

"How?"

"I think I shall set this hotel on fire," sedately replied Jimmy, as if he was accustomed to do such a playful and ordinary act every day of his life.

Bob gazed at him with eyes that glistened like saucers.

"Wild, stark, raving mad!" he commented. "Or else it's worse. Go to bed, Jimmy, and I'll put hot bricks to your head."

"I'm all right. I don't mean to commit arson, Bob, but simply get up a racket, by which I hope to insure a few lives. You know I have been downstairs on a voyage of discovery?"

"Yes."

"There's a big gong which hangs in the lower hall."

"Yes."

"I asked his royal dukedom behind the bar what it was for, and he said that in case of fire they could ring it and alarm the guests. You could not hear it much further than Ireland, to judge from its looks."

"Go on."

"About midnight I intend to have in this house a sort of St. Patrick's day," Jimmy continued. "Bob, you won't have much to do."

"What will it be?"

"Ring the fire gong; we'll raise the whole house, and I'll try to insure most of the guests here. It is a T. I. idea."

"Thoroughly idiotic?"

"No, sir; tremendously intellectual."

Bob didn't take much stock in the "tremendously intellectual" plan, but he promised to do his part.

Midnight soon arrived.

All was still.

Plainly most of the dwellers in the hotel were snoring the sleep of the blissful.

"Now is our time," said Jimmy, as the clock struck twelve.

Noiselessly the two conspirators against peace and quietness crept into the hall.

Jimmy took up a prominent position at one end of the hall.

"Get ready to do your gong act, Bob," he said.

Bob got by the gong.

"Fire—fire—fire!" shouted Jimmy at the top of his voice.

Bang—bang—bang! went Bob at the gong, creating a most unearthly uproar.

In a second the wildest sort of confusion reigned.

Doors on all sides flew open, and people—half-dressed or not dressed at all—popped out.

"What's the matter?" cried a dozen voices.
 "Fire—fire—fire!" cried Jimmy.
 Bang—bang—bang! went the gong.
 Out into the corridor rushed the startled guests.
 "Insure your lives—your only chance!" Jimmy cried, note-book in hand. "You'll never get out alive!"
 "Oh, merciful heavens!" shrieked an old maid, scantily clad.
 "Oh, fie, ma'am; please get in and dress," pleaded Jimmy. "We ain't rehearsing for the 'Black Crook.'"
 "Is there a fire?" she asked.
 "An awful one—stairs all burned away, cellar in flames—only way to escape is to climb down the side of the house."
 "Merciful Providence!"
 "Only one chance to save your life, ma'am."
 "Oh, tell me, brave youth!"
 "Insure your life. Insured folks never die. The company don't let them."
 "Is it so?"
 "Statistics prove it. Here is a blank policy—put your name down. Your only hope. Here is a pencil."
 "The old maid, half dead with fright, scrawled a hasty signature.
 "Oh, Lord, I shall die, anyhow!" she wailed. "I smell smoke!"
 "Probably it is the negro waiter burning," said Jimmy. "Would you escape, ma'am?"
 "Pray save me, gallant boy!"
 "Skip right down the stairs, then. But I say, ma'am."
 "Well?"
 "Put something around that blessed old form of yours, or folks will think that the museum is on fire and one of the curiosities has escaped."
 But the old maid was already climbing downstairs at a race-horse gait, and did not hear him.
 "Victim the first," Jimmy grinned. "Next."
 "Next" chanced to be a burly Dutchman, in a loud attire of red flannel night-cap and a pair of rubber boots.
 He held his hat in one hand and a towel in the other, after the approved style in which people at fires generally save their valuables.
 "Insure your life?" asked Jimmy, grabbing him.
 "Mine Gott!" he vociferated. "Let me go!"
 "Do it cheap!"
 "Ten thousand blazes! I vos os goot as a dead man already!"
 "We'll take the risks."
 "Get out of the way, I want to esgabe."
 "Well, you can't till you insure your life. I won't let you go till you do, and if you stay here, you'll be burned to ashes in a second!"
 "He vos grazzy," said the Dutchman. "Holy Moses! I vill do anything!"
 Jimmy had his name down in a minute.
 "Now, you can beat O'Leary's time if you want to," he remarked, letting him go.
 "Dot poor lunatic vill be roasted shust like a Goney Island clam," he said, as he fell most of the way down the flight.
 Bob in his spells of rest from gong exercise was watching Jimmy's little game.
 One of his brilliant ideas occurred to him.
 He, too, was near a stairs, and why might not he get some half-scared-to-death fleers from fire to subscribe to his books?
 Bob left off ringing and awaited a chance.
 Presently a half-dressed Irishman came rushing by.
 Bob grabbed him.
 "Only one chance to escape conflagration and cremation," he said. "Subscribe for Professor Glue's 'Rise of Hieroglyphic Art in Antique Archives.' Beautifully bound. Thirty-eight parts at—"
 "To the blazes wid ye an' yer higoglyphic, fwwhatever it is! If ye want to save it, put it in a cage. Let go av me!" yelled the Irishman.
 "You don't go till you subscribe."
 "I don't?"
 "No, sir."
 "Ye're a liar—take that, ye son av a gun!" and a right-hander placed square between Bob's eyes caused him to relinquish his hold and stagger back against the wall.
 "Try it again, baby," yelled Jimmy, who had witnessed the little episode.
 "Whoop!" screamed a voice. "Room for the Wildcat of Oregon!" and a black-bearded western man, evidently a little under the influence of liquor, came bouncing along the hall.
 "Collar him on the fly," advised Jimmy.
 Bob did.
 He caught the wildcat by the leg.
 "You're rushing to your death," he said, "the halls are blazing. Subscribe for 'The Beauties of New Zealand,' written by—"
 "Howling coyotes!" the wildcat exclaimed. "Hands off, I'm the Prairie-flower of the Black Hills!"

"I don't care if you're the Skunk-weed of Oshkosh. I want you to subscribe."
 "Subscribe be blanked. There's a present for you, you web-footed tadpole," and the wildcat picked up Bob as if he was a small dog, whirled him around, kicked him once or twice, and then flung him on the floor.
 "A bull's-eye for the Terror of the Great West!" roared the wildcat, as he sped on. "I've saved sixteen lives, and I'm going to save sixty more. Hurrah for bully old Oregon!" and taking a flying leap over the balusters he disappeared from view.
 "To blazes with this old fire racket," surlily said Bob, as he looked at his clothes. "I've got all the fire I want."
 "Grip a cripple or a baby in arms next," advised Jimmy. "I've insured six."
 "Just your darned luck."
 Just then a terrific series of yells from the upper end of the corridor attracted their attention.
 "What's broke loose now?" asked Bob.
 "Oh, look at it!" laughed Jimmy, pointing in the direction from which the outcries proceeded.
 Bob obeyed.
 A comical sight was his reward.
 Half-way through the fan-light, over one of the doors, was a fat man struggling frantically.
 He had started to escape in that way, but had got stuck in the aperture when half-way through.
 "Help—help—help!" he continued to screech.
 The boys rushed toward him.
 "What in the deuce are you doing there?" queried Jimmy.
 "Trying to escape!" replied the fat man.
 "Why don't you get out of your door?"
 "I lost the key."
 "Well, you're a goner!"
 "Good Lord, is there a fire?"
 "Is there? The whole building is ablaze. Everything is burned except this wing."
 "Oh, save me—save me!" pleaded the fat man. "I will reward you most nobly."
 "Business before pleasure. Will you insure your life if I save you?"
 "If I have any left to insure. How can I get out?"
 "Fast," observed Bob, "or take a dose of salts. Then you may be able to slip through in a week or so."
 "Or you might get a goat in the inside to buck you through," said Jimmy.
 "Oh, please help me," asked the fat man, as he heard some affrighted woman scream downstairs. "I can hear the flames rage."
 "Is your door locked?" Jimmy asked.
 "Yes."
 Without another word Jimmy lifted his foot and applied it vigorously to the panel.
 It didn't yield.
 Another application of boot.
 Crash, and the frail lock gave way, and the door flew open.
 The boys rushed into the room.
 They grabbed the old chap by the feet.
 "A sailor's wife a sailor's star should be,
 Yeo ho, my lads, yeo ho!"
 sang Jimmy, as he and Bob pulled away like bulls when the "yeo ho" came in.
 "Oh, Lord! You'll pull me apart. Je-rusalem, I'm splitting!" shouted the fat man.
 "Once more for the chorus," bade Bob.
 "Yeo ho, my lads, yeo ho!"
 But the old chap was stuck fast.
 There seemed to be a strong probability that they would have to pull the building down if they wanted to get him out.
 "Listen to the flames roar!" exclaimed Jimmy, with a wink at his chum.
 "If we want to save ourselves we'd better skip," responded Bob.
 "Oh, merciful heavens, try to save me! I'll give you money, palaces—anything!"
 "Will you buy books?" asked Bob, business foremost in his thoughts.
 "Cart-loads of them!"
 "All right, we'll try it for the last time," answered Bob.
 They grabbed his feet for the third time.
 "Of all the wives as e'er you know,
 Yeo ho, lads, ho—yeo ho—yeo ho!
 There's none like Nancy Lee, I trow,
 Yeo ho, lads, ho—yeo ho!"
 they sang, as they pulled like a yoke of oxen.

PART XI.

Jimmy and Bob pulled away at the fat old man who was stuck in the fan-light, yelling for help and imagining that every moment he heard the roar of flames.

"Pull, boys—pull, for the love of heaven!" he entreated.

The boys concentrated all of their energies on one final, decisive pull.

It was a success.

In fact, it was too much of a success.

The old gent descended like a mountain of flesh, and Jimmy and Bob went down on the floor in a hurry.

"Am I all here?" asked Jimmy, ruefully, as he sat up and gazed about.

"Wonder if the Living Skeleton still survives?" said Bob, looking at the prostrate fat man.

He was slowly arising.

"Hurt yourself?" queried Jimmy.

"No—no," replied the fat man, rushing for the door. "Let us fly."

"No place where we can hire wings," practically replied Jimmy. "You can't escape through the door."

"Why not?"

"The stairs are all burned away."

"Great God! What can we do?"

"Burn. We'll make highly interesting and charred corpses. Better start your prayers, sir; the burning act will come on very soon."

The fat man seemed almost paralyzed with fear, and his face was the color of a chalk-pit.

"But I don't want to get burned!" he exclaimed.

"Neither did the nigger cook, but he is sizzling away in the most stylish manner with his arms folded and a full confession in his right shoe," answered Jimmy.

"How can we escape?" roared the fat man, totally oblivious of all save his eagerness to escape.

Just then Jimmy, who was wondering what to do next, caught sight of an umbrella standing in one corner.

It was not a nice, gilt-edged umbrella with tassels on the top, and a scene in Switzerland painted on the handle.

But was a huge cotton affair, that looked like a circus tent when it was raised, and had a handle the size of a small tree.

Jimmy grabbed it.

"I have an idea!" he shouted. "We are saved!"

"Tell me," gasped the fat man,

"We will lower you to the ground in this umbrella."

"What!"

"N. T.—no taffy. I'm talking up to the bull's-eye. If you don't want to get cremated, this is your only chance. Where is a rope?"

"They don't grow in this lot," calmly answered Bob.

"Have you a rope concealed anywhere around your person?" Jimmy inquired of the fat man.

"Heavens, no!" groaned that unfortunate individual. "I ain't a traveling agent for a rope factory. I'm an undertaker."

"Well, this fire will make trade good. Bob, if you was me, how would you die—in a standing or sitting position?"

"Standing," answered Bob; "the firemen can dig you out easier."

"Don't talk that way," pleaded the fat man. "Oh, for a rope!"

Jimmy, seized by a sudden inspiration, tore the bed-clothes from the bed.

A rope netting was disclosed beneath.

"Saved!" yelled Jimmy, as he tore the rope up.

He quickly knotted it together.

It formed quite a long line—equal to reaching the ground from the window.

He raised the window.

Taking the umbrella, he opened it, and tied the rope to its handle.

"All aboard, sir," said he, to the fat man. "Step into the palace car, sir."

"It will break," said the gentleman addressed, staring in fear at the frail contrivance.

"All right, sir," responded Jimmy, "the flames are creeping up the hallway. You'll burn splendid. Fat men always do. Got any last requests to make before we leave you? No charge for messenger service."

This determined the fat man.

"Hold on," he cried, "I'll go!"

He clambered out onto the window-sill.

"Careful, sir; remember that it ain't an iron steamship you're stepping onto," reminded Jimmy. "You ain't as light as a dew-drop."

The fat man with many a sigh clutched the handle of the umbrella and twisted his legs around it.

"This style six for a cent—background of roses thrown in if desired," grinned Jimmy, as he and Bob carefully began to lower the rope.

Down the side of the hotel, gripping on the umbrella, his face the picture of misery, swayed the fat man.

"Makes an interesting tableau," said Jimmy, to Bob.

"Highly moral group for Sunday-schools and church fairs," whispered Bob in return.

"Oh, be careful," begged the man, as he swung against the bricks.

"Got any particular spot where you would like to be buried?" asked Jimmy.

"What?"

"Which do you prefer—a tombstone or a monument?"

"What do you mean?"

"Shall we plant an oyster flower, or a red—red cabbage over your grave?"

"Please explain," begged the fat man, in an agony of apprehension as he gracefully bumped against a shutter.

"Well," answered Jimmy, "I don't want to alarm you, but——"

"But what?"

"You won't blame us if you go down somewhat unexpectedly."

"Oh, speak."

"The rope is giving away. There is a beautiful iron fence right below you, sir, with sharp iron spikes; you may not hit them."

The fat man nearly let go his hold, he was so affrighted.

"Boys, noble youths, brave lads, if I only reach the ground in safety I will give you half of my property," he wailed.

"Two coal-scuttles, a stationary wash-tub, and an old hat," parenthetically remarked Jimmy, then aloud:

"We won't drop you if we can possibly help it."

They did not.

After a jogging, swinging, bumping journey, the fat man reached the ground.

"Safe at last!" he murmured, as he climbed out of his frail vehicle.

"Say!" bawled Jimmy.

"What?" he answered.

"Got any gold about you?"

"You will find five hundred dollars in my carpet-bag," he answered. "Take it—you are welcome to it. But how will you escape?"

"Crawl through the key-hole, and float on the smoke!" yelled back Jimmy. "Good-by, Daniel Lambert," and the umbrella and rope landed at the fat man's feet, while the two boys disappeared from the window.

Meanwhile, a lively scene was being enacted outside of the hotel.

One of the guests had carried the alarm of fire through the town.

It wasn't long before the whole fire department of Allegheny City came thundering up to the hotel.

"Where's the fire?" asked the foreman of one of the hose companies.

Nobody knew.

The half-dressed guests were clustered outside of the house, but much to their surprise, no evidence of fire was visible.

The proprietor of the hotel was on hand, too.

"Who in the blank started the alarm of fire?" he asked.

Just then Jimmy appeared.

"There's the boy who was yelling fire!" cried half a dozen.

The proprietor grabbed him by the back of the neck.

"What do you mean by raising a false alarm?" he asked.

"I didn't."

"Who did?"

Jimmy saw Bob enjoying the racket a short distance off.

"There's the fellow who did it!" he responded, pointing to Bob.

"He was ringing the fire-gong. Naturally enough I shouted fire."

Without another word the angry proprietor dropped Jimmy and grabbed Bob.

"You young scoundrel!" he exclaimed. "I've got you! Ruin my house, will you, by raising a bogus alarm of fire?"

"He put me up to it," Bob extenuated.

"Who did?"

"That fellow you just dropped."

"It is false!" answered Jimmy, stepping up. "I don't know the person at all."

"Why, Jimmy!" gasped Bob.

"My name is not Jimmy—it is Herbert," calmly replied our hero. "You ought to be ashamed of yourself."

"So he had," put in a lady, who was elegantly arrayed in a bed-quilt and a man's hat.

"Give him six months," said Jimmy. "He's evidently a dangerous character."

The proprietor handed the luckless Bob over to a constable.

"I'll make a charge against him in the morning," he said. "Take him away."

"Young man," said Jimmy, solemnly, "I hope this will be a warning for you to desist from your wicked courses. If you leave me the address of your prison I will mail you tracts weekly."

"You cheeky galoot," began Bob, getting wrathful at what appeared to him to be a cowardly betrayal.

"That'll do, bite it off short," responded Jimmy, with a lordly wave of his hand. "Constable, remove the curiosity, and bury him in the deepest dungeon."

"Come along, ye young jail-bird," said the constable, jerking Bob along by the collar.

"But—" expostulated Bob.

"No buts, or begorra I'll but yez wid a club," and away went Bob struggling in the officer's grasp.

Hardly had he vanished before the hero of the umbrella fire-escape appeared.

"Where are the charred corpses?" he asked, wiping his forehead.

"What are you giving us, old sport?" asked the foreman of the hose company.

"The poor, innocent victims of this terrible conflagration," perspired the fat gent.

"There hain't been no conflag here," laconically responded the foreman. "You'd better go to bed, daddy, and be rubbed with hot bricks."

"Are you crazy?" cried the fat man. "Didn't I just escape with my life?"

"Left your wits behind, though, didn't yer?"

"No, sir; I was saved by the heroism of a brave boy. If he is burned, I shall certainly bury him, free of charge, in one of my unrivaled satin-lined caskets, best in existence, indorsed by press, public and all who have ever used them as—"

Here the speaker recollected that he was ringing in part of one of his business circulars, and stopped short.

"If I could only see the brave boy," he said.

"What would you pony up for the privilege?" asked a voice.

"Fifty dollars."

"Take it. Here's your heroic infant," and Jimmy stepped out of the crowd.

If he had been the fat man's long-lost brother, with the usual strawberry mark upon his left arm, the old fellow could not have embraced him with more warmth.

"I was afraid you were burnt," he said. "But they say there wasn't any fire."

"No, sir; false alarm."

"I appreciate your heroism just as much, though. But did you not have a companion?"

"I have been grossly deceived in him," Jimmy said, with a long face. "He is a black sheep."

"You don't say. Where is he now?"

"Jugged."

The fat man looked mystified.

"You don't mean to say that—that he is in an ordinary jug?" he asked.

Jimmy laughed.

"He's in prison," he said, "for raising the false alarm of fire."

"You don't say so?"

"Slightly."

"But what was his object?"

"Robbery, probably. When arrested he had a dozen spoons, six watches, a barrel of flour and a sofa bedstead concealed upon his person."

The old gent held up his hands in horror.

"He had an honest face," he remarked.

"Can't always tell by that," sagely said Jimmy. "I knew a man who had a very honest face—such a phenomenally honest phiz that rich old coves used to stop him on the street and ask him to take care of their watches. That was what he told the judge when he was arrested for being a sort of walking jewelry store; but he got six months, all the same."

"Remarkable!" exclaimed the old gent. "Come with me, darling youth, and we will have a quiet midnight supper."

"Oh, yummy," grinned Jimmy to himself. "Brave boy—heroic youth—that's me. It takes half a dollar, cash in advance, to know me."

"Say," whispered a voice, interrupting Jimmy's reflections.

Our hero turned and beheld the foreman of the hose company at his shoulder.

"D'yer know his old nibs?" asked the foreman, confidentially.

"Nixey, Jim."

"Beware of him."

"Why?"

The foreman pressed his forehead significantly, and indicated the fat gent by a jerk of his thumb.

"Off his crank," he said.

"Crazy?"

"Dat's my mind. He's been giving a lot of the fellers putty 'bout escapin' in an umbrella from the fourth story of the hotel. Reckon dat the fright crazed him."

"Oh, I guess he's all hunk."

"Mebbe, but if I was you, sonny, I'd borrow a pop an' if he got too funny I'd pull on him. Do yer savvy?" and off sloped the foreman to go home with his company in deep disgust at the false alarm.

"What was that border ruffian saying to you?" asked the fat man, coming over.

"He said you had rats in your garret," replied Jimmy.

"What is it any of his darned business?" queried the fat man, excitedly. "S'pose that I have got rats in my garret. There hain't no law against it. Reckon a man can have rats or cats or walruses if he wants to in his own garret."

"This deluded old fossil actually don't know United States yet," groaned Jimmy. "I mean that his opinion is that you're crazy."

The fat man drew himself up and clenched his fists.

"Where is the escaped convict?" he asked. "I reckon I can render him fit for one of my rosewood coffins, all modern improvements, real silver nails, the only article of its kind made in the United States—beware of imitations as—"

Once more the old gent checked himself and coughed apologetically.

"We'll have the supper now," he resumed.

They did.

Over a cozy supper in a cozy supper-room, for everybody in the hotel was wide awake, the fat old gent divulged that his name was Muggins, and that he was the proprietor of a flourishing undertaker's establishment in Reading, and he begged Jimmy if he ever got into the vicinity of the town to call upon him.

Jimmy promised.

"Here's your five hundred dollars, sir, that you said I could have," he said, producing the bills.

"Keep it for your bravery," fervently said the fat old gent.

"If you ever die, my son, let me know, and I'll bury you free of charge; yes, I will, in one of my improved General Washington caskets, all varnished, photograph of deceased on top, protected by 'trade-mark'—then, 'bless me soul, I'm at it again,' and the old gent fairly groaned.

A thought struck Jimmy.

"Always grip the graft," he said. "Say, Mr. Muggins, do you have any agents to sell your unrivaled wares on commission?"

"Bless me, no."

"Let me try?"

"A most remarkable and businesslike idea. Or course you can."

"What per cent. will you give me?"

"Twenty on cash sales—ten on time."

"All right," replied Jimmy. "That will be hot. If I can't paralyze them with life insurance, I'll kill them with coffins. Got any circulars?"

Old Mr. Muggins had not, but he promised to send some as soon as he got home. Then he retired to bed again.

Jimmy went up to his room, and lit a cigar.

His thoughts wandered to Bob, and he could not help laughing as he pictured his chum, sitting disconsolately in a dirty prison cell in the agreeable companionship of festive rats and sociable cockroaches.

"Wouldn't he just make an artistic massacre of me if he had me there now?" laughed Jimmy. "It was mean, but I had to do it to save myself. Never mind, I'll get him out, somehow."

With this salve for his conscience, Jimmy retired to bed.

He was up bright and early. By careful and apparently unconcerned inquiries, he found out that Bob was to be taken before a judge that very morning at eleven o'clock.

Bob was temporarily locked up in the town jail, from whence he would be taken to the court under charge of a constable.

This constable was to be an Irishman named Mickey Riley.

Jimmy ascertained that this chap's foible was lady-killing.

In fact, he considered himself to be a perfect masher, although he was about as pretty as a Mexican idol in war-paint.

Jimmy found this out, and then looked at his watch.

It was only eight o'clock, consequently he had three hours to operate in.

His resolve was soon made.

The chambermaid who attended to his room at the hotel was about his size.

He accosted her in the hall, and boldly kissed her.

Not much displeased, the girl started back.

"Ain't you awful!" she cried.

"Terrible—don't I look awfully ashamed?" laughed Jimmy. "Do you want to make ten dollars, good-looking?"

"How?"

"Lend me one of your dresses, a cloak, and a hat for a little while?"

"Gracious! what do you want of them?"

"To eat, Lady Hamilton. Will you do it?"

The girl did not hesitate long.

Ten dollars was a good sum to her.

"Do it," pressed Jimmy, "and I'll float around in a satin-lined barge week after next and marry you. I'm dead mashed on you."

"Taffy!" laughed the girl, as she hastened up to her room.

She scurried back soon with the required articles of feminine apparel.

"You're not going to do anything wrong, are you?" she asked.

"Only going to kill a highly respectable old lady for the gold in her teeth," answered Jimmy. "I say, baby mine."

"Well, impudence."

"Don't give me away. You'll get your duds all safely back."

"Laws, I won't tell," promised the girl, as Jimmy slipped a ten-dollar bill in her hand. "I would like to know, though, what you are going to do with the clothes?"

"Consult any reputable clairvoyant," answered Jimmy. "Over the ditch, Maria."

Maria took the hint and disappeared.

"Now for the transformation scene," soliloquized Jimmy, as he locked the door.

First he took off his coat, collar and necktie, and banged his hair.

Then he put on the dress, and as it was rather short he rolled his pants up to the knee and secured them there.

In a few moments, by careful and artistic effort, he stood changed into a rosy, coquettish-looking girl with a neat straw hat perched jauntily upon his head.

"There!" he cried, as he examined himself in the glass. "Ain't I a daisy?—Just sweet sixteen and ma lets me wear long dresses."

PART XII.

Jimmy made a very rosy cheeked, good-looking girl.

He was soon made aware of this fact.

He passed down the back stairs, and went out of the rear entrance of the hotel.

On the corner of the street stood several statues—would-be mashers—which infest every town or city.

They stared boldly at Jimmy.

"Ain't she a daisy?"

"Skip the gutter, my dear."

"Hold on, baby!"

"She's somebody's lollipop."

These were a few of the comments that reached Jimmy's ears.

"Guess I'm all right," he chuckled to himself, "if I can mash those corner chromos," and he smiled saucily back.

One of the fellows, with more egotism than his friends, conceived that the smile was meant for him.

"I've mashed her," he said.

"Like fun," answered one of his companions.

"I bet I have."

"Bet you haven't."

"I say I have. See if I don't pick her up."

"Bet you a dollar you can't!"

"I'll take it."

The would-be lady-killer started in hot pursuit of Jimmy.

That rogue heard the footsteps behind him and looked around.

"I'll be hanged if one of the curiosities ain't after me," he said to himself. "I'll be the worst graft he ever tackled."

The lady-killer quickened his steps.

He reached Jimmy's side.

"Beg pardon, miss," he said, all smiles, as he tipped his hat very politely.

"What d'yer soy?" replied Jimmy, in a coarse voice.

The other looked astonished.

"Beautiful day," he essayed.

"You're a liar!" coolly answered Jimmy.

"Great Lord, who is the girl?" reflected the other, but he did not give up the attempt.

"Let me take your arm," he impudently said, trying to take Jimmy's arm in his own.

"Guess you've gone about far enough, George," thought Jimmy.

There was an ash-barrel filled with refuse near by.

Without the slightest word of warning Jimmy let fly his right hand, struck the fop square on the nose and landed him on the barrel.

It upset and over he went in the gutter amidst a shower of ashes and refuse.

"There, my little man," said Jimmy. "Lie there—it will do you good. Wait there for a while, and I'll send nurse around with a baby carriage to wheel you home to ma."

If there ever was a completely demoralized and astonished chap it was he in the gutter.

He got ruefully up and looked at his spoiled clothes, and felt of his bleeding nose.

"Well, I'll be cussed," he said, as he arose and dove down a side street to escape the jeers of his delighted friends.

Jimmy kept right on.

He had ascertained that Mickey Riley hung out at a saloon familiarly called the "Dutchman's."

He was soon there.

He called to a little boy who was sitting on a barrel outside, innocently amusing himself with a live rat tied to a string.

"Here, sonny," called Jimmy.

The boy put the string, rat and all into his pocket and waltzed over.

"Do you know Riley?" Jimmy asked.

"Yes, ma'am—the copper?"

"The same; is he inside?"

"Yes, ma'am."

"Go in and tell him that a young and lovely lady wants to see him outside. Here's a quarter for you."

The boy gripped the quarter and disappeared into the interior of the saloon.

Presently he re-appeared.

A bullet-headed man dressed very flashily and appearing fearfully conscious that he had a red necktie on, came out with him.

"This must be Riley," muttered Jimmy. "Wonder what museum he escaped from?"

"Do you want to see me, miss?" said Riley with a tremendous bow.

"Is this Mr. Riley?"

"The same, ma'am."

"Can I see you privately?"

"Av course. Do you object to entering the saloon?"

"Is it respectable?"

"Half av the high-tone av the city live there, miss. Will ye come?"

Jimmy assented.

Riley led the way through the side entrance to a cozy little parlor upstairs.

"Riley, ye divil," he was snickering to himself, "it is a masher ye are. Here is a purty colleen completely fascinated wid yer repuchation. It is axin' ye to marry her she'll be doin'. Faix I belave it is me personal magnetism that does it."

Jimmy sat down upon a chair.

"We are as secluded as if we were twenty miles beneath the earth, ma'am," asserted Riley, with a most bewitching smile.

Jimmy ogled him back.

"Ah, Mr. Riley," he said, with a sigh, "no wonder the girls love you."

Riley looked approvingly at his red necktie.

"Shure, I can't help it if nachure made me iligant," he answered.

"I hear half of the young ladies in this town are on the verge of suicide about you."

"Be heavens! there was one near the depot that wanted to walk away wid herself wid a razor."

"Poor thing—I don't blame her."

"Faix, she is terrible gone," reflected Riley. "Divil a word does she know about the old woman at home an' the six kids."

"Do you believe in love at first sight, Mr. Riley?"

"Up to me neck, miss."

"You are not married."

"Nary a bit."

"Then, Mr. Riley," said Jimmy, trying to rake up a blush. "I—I love you!" and she tumbled into his arms.

Riley nearly fell over, but he braced up nobly.

"Phat would Mrs. Riley say to this?" he wondered. "If she should look in now it would be a double-barreled funeral."

"Call me pet names," sighed Jimmy.

"Phat?"

"Call me baby gumdrops."

"Shure, I'll call ye taffy if ye wish," answered Riley, as he imprinted a kiss on Jimmy's rosy lips.

"Darling," murmured Jimmy, "will you do me a favor?"

"A thousand, baby—baby——"

"Baby gumdrops. Will you promise?"

"Yis."

"I have a brother," sobbed Jimmy, squeezing out a tear by an awful exertion.

"Yis."

"He is in trouble."

"Bad cess to the same."

"You are to take him to court this very morning. He will get locked up, and it will—break my heart!" sobbed Jimmy.

Riley whistled in astonishment.

"Whurroo!" he uttered.

"He is a poor, inexperienced boy," went on Jimmy, watching the effects of his words. "He isn't versed in the world's ways."

"Begorra, he's learning fast," commented Riley. "When I took him to the station house last night he had a pack of cards in his pocket, and he was requesting to play anybody in the lock-up."

"My poor brother," screamed Jimmy, "they will ruin him. And now he has to go to prison."

The artful boy threw his arms around Riley's neck.

"If you could only let him escape," he murmured.

"It would be as much as my place is worth."

"But recollect how I love you."

Riley scratched his head.

"I'll manage it somehow," he said, for he was completely gone on the supposed girl.

"You will?"

"Shure."

Jimmy pressed his hand.

"I will never forget it," he said. "Where will I meet you?"

"At Casey's—yer know where it is—at three this afternoon."

Jimmy didn't have any idea of where Casey's was situated.

He didn't give it away, though.

"By-bye, baby mine," he said, as he left the enamored Riley.

"I is oor little birdie, an' I'se'll fly to oo at three, sweetee sugar."

"Dood-bye," responded Riley, relapsing into baby talk, too.

Jimmy got out of the saloon and walked back to the hotel.

"That Riley is softer than a pound of butter that somebody has sat on for a week," he soliloquized. "A nice old figure-head he has for a masher—he'd make a bully top for a gate-post."

He went to the hotel and changed his clothes.

"Here, Nancy Lee," he called out of his door to the chambermaid. "here are your trailing silks."

She took them smilingly.

"I'd like to know what you wanted them for?" she said.

"Oh, I'm a body-stealer, and I wanted them to wrap around the corpse," laughed Jimmy.

"Oh, you horrid thing," she cried, as she darted out of the room.

Jimmy put on his hat and sauntered out.

Meanwhile Riley had gone after Bob.

He took him from his cell and marched him to the court house by a round about way.

Presently they arrived at a secluded corner.

"Hit me," whispered Riley.

"What?" gasped Bob.

"Slug me!"

"Say, I ain't taking you to the lunatic asylum," blurted Bob.

"It's all right," assured Riley; "I saw your sister this morning."

"Fust I ever knew that I owned one," was on Bob's lips; then a happy thought flashed through his mind that Jimmy might be at the bottom of the "sister."

"What did she say?" asked Bob.

"She said ye were young and fresh."

"Very fresh."

"Bedad, ye're roight—an' axed me to let ye escape. I promised her I would. Don't ye see me racket? Knock me down an' have fun wid me, ye desperate thafe. All I will be able to do will be to lay on me back an' howl bloody murder."

Bob tumbled.

He hit Riley a gentle tap on the shoulder that wouldn't hurt a flea.

Riley fell very artistically over a hydrant and carefully rolled onto his back, taking great care not to hurt the red necktie.

"Murder!" he remarked, as if he was talking to himself.

Bob fled up the street like a flash.

But a respectable old gentleman had witnessed the proceedings from the stoop of a house nearby.

He flourished his umbrella and darted in front of Bob.

"Stand back, ye blessed ould idiot!" roared Riley, getting up on one elbow; "he's desperate—he carries a shooter, an' he's got a carvin' knife twilve fate long up his sleeve."

"Good Lord!" exclaimed the old gent, as he darted back and allowed Bob to run past him like a shot.

Bob wasn't long before he disappeared down a side street.

He ran ker-plunk into Jimmy's arms.

"Well, jail-bird, where are you flying now?" asked Jimmy.

"You're a nice pill," said Bob, as soon as he had recovered his breath.

"Sugar-coated?"

"You're a mean sneak," panted Bob.

"Oh, go ahead, call me sweet and tender names. Are you a married man or a dog?"

"That's all right, Jimmy; you played me a contemptible trick."

"Had to, my dear boy."

"And I don't want nothing to do with you."

"Bobby, my boy," calmly replied Jimmy, "don't let your angry passions rise. I firmly decline to be shook. In me you see your preserver."

"Like blazes!"

It is so. If it hadn't been for me, you'd been riding luxuriously in the Black Maria to spend a ten-days' vacation in the lockup. Behold your sister!"

"Was it you that got up the sister snap?" asked Bob, forgetting his wrath.

"Yea. I'm going to flee to some coral isle with Riley, and start a tribe of highly educated and strictly religious savages."

Jimmy told Bob the whole story, and Bob, laughing at the victimized Riley, forgot his anger.

At three o'clock Riley was on hand at the rendezvous.

He had told his superiors a stupendous parable about how Bob had knocked him down and half-butchered him, and had received a reprimand, which he didn't care for in the least.

He had also been instructed to make every effort to retake his prisoner, which, of course, he nobly disregarded.

Riley was fixed up regally to meet his supposititious mash.

He had a collar with ends big enough to slide down hill on, cuffs that dangled about his finger nails, and a scarf-pin of gorgeous hideousness.

"Bedad, I will kill her completely wid me tone," he chuckled.

"Faix, I conjecture that I will get a divorce from Mrs. Riley, and marry me new gal."

He swaggered into the dining-saloon where he expected to meet Jimmy, and sat down at a table.

"Has there been a leddy in here?" he asked.

"Yes," answered the waiter.

"What sort of a leddy?"

"She said she had walked all of the way from Paris, and she wanted five cents to buy a bun with."

"Ye are too fresh," replied Riley. "Bring me a porther house chop and a glass av beer. If a leddy axes for me, sind her in."

But no lady did.

The only ladies that came were desirous of selling apples, or disposing of peanuts.

Poor Riley sat in that restaurant till five o'clock.

Then he got up.

"Bedad," he said, as he slammed his hat onto his head, "I have been stood up. If I catch that young diyil, I'll have him hanged. As for his sister—bedad, I belave she is no more his sister than I am a crockery elephant."

Riley thought so more than ever the next day.

For he received a beautiful little note, which read:

"Wooden-eyed Riley:—Much obliged for letting my brother go. Sorry I couldn't meet you yesterday afternoon, but had to go around to another house and help a fellow have a fit. Remember me to Mrs. Riley, and tell her she need not keep awake nights for fear of me cutting her out. I want a man—not a monkey."

"Your baby—gum drops,

"JIMMY GRIMES."

It is needless to say that Riley got wilder than a bull with a red flag in front of him.

He kicked over chairs, jumped on his hat, and licked a little nigger.

"Be Heavens!" he shouted, "they played me for a sucker! She wur not a girl but a bye. Riley, ye are a ruined man. Will somebody bring me a bye wid a big club an' a prodigious muscle? It is foine exercise I will afford him bating av me."

But as no boy with a club was on hand just then, Riley did the next best thing.

He went off—got whooping, galvanized, beastly tight, and got home about midnight.

There he started a circus by pushing him wife on the stove, chasing his children with a meat-ax and throwing the cat out of the window.

The result was that three fellow-constables escorted him to the lockup, and he got fined ten dollars next day.

He paid it with a long face.

"Begorra!" he muttered, between his clenched teeth, as he left the judge's presence, "it is square onto them that I will git if it paralyzes me."

Whether or not the Irishman kept his word, future developments will show.

As for Jimmy and Bob they had dusted to Reading.

Jimmy with the five hundred dollars given him by the undertaker had settled his hotel bill at Allegheny City, tipped the waiters, taken his bogus diamonds from out of the safe, purchased new suits of nobby clothes for himself and Bob, and had three hundred left.

Consequently our good-natured, devil-may-care little hero felt as jolly as a little tin king.

Arriving at Reading, they put up at the Keystone House.

After dinner the boys strolled out into the main street of the flourishing city.

"Got a cigar, Bob?" asked Jimmy, as they walked along, ogling all the pretty girls. And Reading is the place for pretty girls—they grow there.

Bob felt in his pocket.

"Owing to some unexplained miracle I've got two," he replied.

"Give-away cigars?"

"What are those?"

"Stinkers that a fellow can't smoke for fear of death himself, and saves them to give away to his friends."

"Oh, no," laughed Bob; "these are quite the propah capah. Have one?"

Jimmy accepted the proffered weed, and bit the end off.

"Superior cabbage," he remarked. "Got a light?"

Bob hadn't.

Neither had he a match.

Nobody ever has matches when they are wanted.

Jimmy looked around for a chance to get a light.

A crowded car was coming down the street.

It was filled with people.

There was a big picnic on the *tapis* that afternoon, and the people were hurrying to the grounds.

Jimmy watched the car pass by.

The back platform was chock full of men.

Leaning against the brake was a most respectable old gentleman, respectably arrayed in a shining suit of black, and a most reputable high hat.

He was smoking a big cigar with every evidence of satisfaction.

"Hey—hey—hey!" bawled Jimmy, suddenly.

The old gentleman looked around.

"Hey—hey—hey!" repeated Jimmy, at the top of his voice, beckoning vigorously.

The old gentleman looked inquiringly at him.

"You—you—you, come here—here—here!" repeated Jimmy, as if the old gent's life depended upon his instant obedience.

The old gent hurried off of the car.

Half a dozen, attracted by Jimmy's outcries, followed at his heels.

"What's the matter?" asked a score of voices.

The old gentleman was partially frightened, for he didn't know what might be the matter.

He hastened to Jimmy's side.

"What is up?" he asked.

"Can I trouble you for a light, sir?" politely asked Jimmy.

The old gent handed over his cigar with rather trembling fingers.

"What do you want of me?" he begged.

Jimmy returned the cigar with a second bow.

"I only wanted a light, sir. Got it now, and I'm much obliged. Do the same for you some day. Ta-ta!"

The old gent gazed at him with bulging eyes.

"Was that all you wanted of me?" he gasped.

"Kereect."

"Why, you impudent young rascal!" yelled the old gent; "you have made me miss my car."

It was so.

The car had started off, and was rapidly growing small in the distance.

"Darn it!" roared the old gent. "There won't be another car for half an hour. What shall I do?"

"Sit on the curb-stone and enjoy the scenery," politely answered Jimmy, as he and Bob darted around the corner, pursued by the old gent's cane.

PART XIII.

From Reading the boys went to a flourishing city not far away, which, for certain reasons, we will call Irontown.

They put up at a grand hotel, and had quite an enjoyable time till Jimmy got a fearful toothache.

All of you boys who have ever had the pleasure of a struggle with a good, healthy toothache, know what fun it is!

One night the toothache of Jimmy's was particularly severe.

He sat up in bed and swore, and lay down in bed and prayed, and twisted in bed and wept, but it was of no avail.

The toothache kept right on with fifty horse-power.

He tried toothache drops, and burnt the inside of his mouth off.

He put hot poultices on the side of his face till his cheeks looked like amateur mountains.

He stuffed his tooth full of cotton.

He swallowed paregoric to deaden the sense of pain until he got sea-sick, and threw up most of his food for the last two or three years.

"It didn't do any good, though, for the tooth ached away as lively as a cricket.

Of course Bob could not sleep with such a restless bed-fellow.

"Will you be still?" sleepily expostulated Bob.

"I've got a toothache," moaned Jimmy.

"That's the six thousandth time you've said so."

"It hurts."

"Remarkable for a toothache."

"I'm most dying."

"Insure your life," heartlessly chuckled Bob.

"If I ever get well I'll punch your head for that," threatened Jimmy. "Ou—ouh! Jerusalem fireworks, how it pains!"

"If you don't shut up, and either go to sleep or die, I'll kill you!" said Bob, as he rolled over and endeavored to go to sleep.

At last, just as he was wondering whether it would hurt much to cut his throat, Jimmy got to sleep just about morning.

He only slept about an hour.

There was a shuffle of feet in front of his window, a few chords of preparation, and then the sound of a band broke out upon the startled air.

Not a good band.

But an independent band, every instrument of which appeared to be playing by itself without regard to time or tune.

Jimmy woke up.

He heard the din.

He kicked Bob.

"Wake up," he shouted, "there's murder in the air!"

Bob woke up.

He listened.

"Smoother me with a bolster," he groaned, "if it ain't 'Grandfather's Clock.'"

"Let's get up and bust it," proposed Jimmy.

The boys tumbled out of bed and looked out of the window.

Below them was a band of dirty musicians playing on dirty instruments and surrounded by an awed and admiring crowd of dirty street boys.

The leader—a genuine Italian—beheld the boys, and he held out a dirty cap with a truly Italian pantomimical accompaniment.

"What's that—a monkey act?" asked Bob.

"No—he intends to express his admiration of our manly beauty and ruffled night-shirts," answered Jimmy.

"Mona!" requested the Italian.

"What d'yer say?" returned both of the boys.

"Mona."

"Oh, it's tag—he's counting," grinned Bob, with an approving nod of his head, as he raised the window. "Go ahead, Garibaldi, we're in. Ana, mana, mona, mite, bossa, lona bono bite—we wo."

Evidently the Italian took it for the language of his own sunny clime.

"Speaka Italian?" he asked.

"Yaw," laughed Bob. "*Oui*—Si. Senor. Parley vous Francaise—nix for stay—set 'em up again."

The Italian rattled off a lot of vernacular and looked up at the window inquiringly.

"Know what I saya?" he asked.

"Most assuredly," replied Bob. "My sentiments exactly. Of course it's so."

A frown gathered upon the other's face.

"Moosic—mona," he repeated; "nica moosic."

"Very," commented Jimmy; "beautiful music—beautiful for a dead march. Beats a boiler factory in active operation."

The Italian didn't understand Jimmy's remarks, but he perfectly understood himself. He wanted money.

He held up a cent, and pantomimed that he would like more of that coin.

Bob regarded the penny with perfect approval.

"Good cent," he assured. "1857—head of Liberty. It's all right, Mazzini."

Meanwhile the rest of the band, all Germans, had started off on "Grandfather's Clock" again.

This was too much for Jimmy.

"Skip, you dark-faced sons of trombones!" he yelled, with a threatening gesture.

"Mona," once more pleaded the leader.

"Nixey, Jim. N. G.—no good—climb—vamose—dance—five-step waltz, or I'll start a cemetery right here," and Jimmy exhibited a most formidable revolver.

With angry gestures and sullen brows the musicians slunk away.

The leader shook his fist menacingly at Jimmy.

"Me getta square," he said.

"Getta parka, getta prairie, too, if you want to," laughed Jimmy, the toothache gone now, as he shut down the sash and went to bed.

He was asleep in a minute. Not for long, though.

Bob awoke him with a hearty kick.

"What the deuce is the matter now?" groaned Jimmy.

"Listen."

Jimmy obeyed.

The strains of "My Pretty Red Rose" saluted his ears.

"Gilmore's Band is back again," said Bob. "Ain't it pretty?"

"Give me cats," answered Jimmy, as he arose, thoroughly mad, and put for the window.

He lifted the sash and looked out.

Down below was the same old band, playing away on the same old instruments, and surrounded by the same old crowd.

"Mona!" bawled the leader, with a smile of triumph, as he held out his cap.

"Get out," answered Jimmy.

"No getta."

"I'll make you."

"Coma downa—Italian man carry knife—sticka American!"

"Very bad man," commented Bob, who had come to the window, too. "Shouldn't wonder if his hands are dyed with the gore of thousands. Nice, agreeable party to have at a funeral."

"I'll fix him," said Jimmy. "Bob, fling him some lucre."

Bob felt in his coat pocket and produced a bad five-cent piece.

"He can't speak English, and he won't know the difference," he said, tossing the coin down.

The Italian picked it up.

He examined it and bit it carefully. Evidently the test was unsatisfactory.

"Badda," he scowled.

"Put it in a money-box on a one horse car, then," advised Bob, smiling agreeably.

Meanwhile Jimmy had gone into several empty rooms near his, and secured the water pitchers. Most of them were filled with water.

He returned with them to the window.

The Italian was inclined to compromise.

"Giva mia tenna cent me playa, 'Nancy Lee,' oncea then go 'way," he offered. "No giva mia tenna cent staya all day."

"Says he'll stay all day—can't bear to part from us. Deuced kind of him," said Bob.

Jimmy divided the water pitchers, giving half to Bob.

"When I say 'Italy drowned,' he curtly ordered.

The Italian had commenced another harangue.

"You stingy, snida gentlemen," he commenced.

"Hear—hear!" yelled Bob, vigorously applauding, to the great joy of the gathering crowd below.

"You no wisha to see poor men maka honest living."

"Bully boy!"

"You cheata poor man."

"We jump on the poor man. Encore," shouted Bob.

"You haba no heart. Your heart eez stona—no 'preciate music of Italy, you."

"Italy—drowned!" shouted Jimmy. Swish—swish, splatter, splash! went the contents of the water pitcher.

About two gallons struck the voluble Italian, and the rest of the aqueous torrent dispersed over the band.

"Baptize the heathen," remarked Jimmy, as he socked it to them.

"Wash off their sins," sang out Bob, as he, too, emptied his pitcher.

The big Italian raved like a maniac in the cuss words of his own tongue.

He could stand being shot at or hit with chairs.

But being struck with water—he, who had not applied water to his person since he was born.

It was too much.

And the rest of the band was equally wild. They didn't admire water.

"Nice little circus we've started," laughed Jimmy. "Bet they won't wake us up any more."

"Cheese it!" yelled a voice from the crowd. "The gutter-snipe's got a rock. Look out for your heads."

Sure enough, the vindictive foreigner had grabbed a rock.

He held it poised, and was about to throw it.

But Fate, in the person of an Irish policeman, interfered.

"Drop the brickbat," he ordered. The Italian obeyed.

"Those boys throwa water on me," he said.

"It is good for ye—ye low-living foreigner," said the officer, with that kindly courtesy so noticeable in men of his race to the Italian nation.

"Me wanta justice."

"I don't care—bounce."

"Me staya here. Thisa free country."

"Not for Italians or Chinese. Get out, ye monkey-aters, or I'll lock the whole av yez up for attempted infanticide."

The Italian saw it was no use to make a kick.

He and his drenched musicians slunk away, with many a revengeful and skulking glance at the window which contained the two boys.

"Ta—ta, sweet lips," yelled Jimmy.

"Good-bye, lovey," roared Jimmy.

"Go to diable!" hissed the Italians, while the stalwart policeman walked stately behind them flourishing his club, and realizing that he was a noble work of nature.

After rising, the boys spent the greater part of the day in sight-seeing.

Amongst other buildings that they visited was a deaf and dumb asylum inclosed in beautiful grounds.

The asylum was fitted up splendidly inside, for it was a private charity, and the boys were quite struck with it.

"If I ever get deaf and dumb I'm going there to board," said Jimmy, as they passed out of the grounds and strolled down the streets.

"You'd get kicked out for a nuisance before you were there a week," laughingly responded Bob.

"You couldn't get in at all," responded Jimmy.

"Why not?"

"Against the rules."

"What rules?"

"Didn't you see them? Dogs and other animals not admitted."

Bob pretended to be very much insulted, and knocked playful

James' hat off. While they were scuffling in fun and chasing one another, they came to a side street.

Jimmy looked down.

A fat old fellow, with a bare bald head, and shirt-sleeves and slippers, was racing a crowd of fleeting musicians.

The old fellow had a double-barreled shotgun in his hand, and he looked mad.

The musicians ran past the boys at the top of their speed, and Jimmy recognized the face of the first and fastest runner.

"Holy peppers, Bob!" he cried, "it's his nibbs."

"Who?"

"Garibaldi."

"Garibaldi who?"

"Don't you know, stupid? The refined son of sunny Italy that I treated to a shower bath this morning. The persistent macaroni eater that howled for 'mona.'"

"Smother me with kisses if it ain't," surprisedly commented Bob.

By this time the old fellow with the gun had reached the spot. He paused, and wiped off his brow with the back of his hand.

"Hot work," sympathizingly observed Jimmy.

"Awful," groaned the other, glancing viciously around as if to discover any brass-bander who would make a good mark.

"What seems to be the matter?"

"That infernal band!"

"What did they do?"

"Been playing before my house for hours, just as I was trying to get a nap. Played 'Grandfather's blasted—blasted—blasted clock.' Wish to the Lord the man that wrote it had to hear it for years."

"Wouldn't they go away?"

"Said they wanted money. Their leader, some blasted foreign murderer, I suppose—looked like it, at least—told me to 'soak my head' when I ordered him off."

"Had to go gunning finally?"

"Yes; wish I'd shot half a dozen, blast 'em!" and the fat fellow put his gun over his shoulder and went home.

"Nice time those talented exiles are having in America," laughed Jimmy.

But Bob was too deeply interested in a young lady whom he had observed at a window near by to reply.

Presently the young lady was joined by a second young lady, and, wonderful to relate, Jimmy got interested in that particular window.

Until chancing to glance at the corner opposite from where they stood, he discovered the brass band gathered wofully.

"See me brace Garibaldi," he said, letting the young ladies slide, very ungallantly.

He crossed the street.

"Garibaldi made a frightened movement to flee, as if he expected Jimmy had another supply of water pitchers concealed about his person.

Jimmy held out his hand in token of friendship.

"Friends, old man," he said.

"No tricks?" asked the other.

"Nixey, Jim."

The other hesitated.

"What luck?" continued Jimmy, offering Garibaldi a cigar, which that foreigner accepted most eagerly.

"Harda luck," he answered, with a most agonizing shrug of his shoulders.

"N. G., hey, Garibadli."

"My name no Garibadli."

"Well, No Garibaldi, how are you?"

"No—no, not No Garibaldi name; not Garibaldi. Me not Garibaldi."

"George Washington, maybe."

"No—no."

"Chrissy Columbia, hey?"

"Not knowa he. My name Pedro."

"Sancho Pedro?"

"No, Pedro Vecoli de la Monticasi Serufa Guiseppo Alesso Vagueiriletto."

"Too short," criticised Jimmy. "There ain't enough of it. Your parents didn't do their duty. I shall be forced to all you Pedro for short. Pedro, I don't bear any malice for soaking you this morning. Come, take a drink."

Pedro willingly obeyed.

Over a glass of beer he chatted away like a monkey.

According to his story he had struck very hard luck in this particular city.

Business was very bad; people had no taste for choice music, and positively refused to contribute to its support.

"Been here ona day," he complained; "getta wet; getta run o er by street car; getta clubbed by polisa; getta chased by badda ole man with gunna."

"Oh, you've had a deuce of a time," soberly assured Jimmy. "Italy never was as good as this—was it? Have a second beer?"

The Italian complied.

He grew more garrulous.

He confided to Jimmy that he could speak English but imperfectly, and could not read it at all.

"No so can any of ze others; dey is ze Yarmana men," he ended, with a sweep of his hand, which bore reference to his waiting compatriots outside.

His words put a base idea into Jimmy's head.

"Nother racket," the rogue grinned to himself. Then aloud:

"Say, Pedro, old Jubilee of one, I can put you in the way of making lots of money."

"How?" eagerly asked Pedro.

"You're a stranger to the city?"

"Yes; getta fired off cars here. No know it at alla."

"Good boy. Now, there's a big house just down the street."

"Where?"

"I'll steer you to it. A gentleman—lots of gold in it—lives there. He's crazy for music; loves to hear a good band."

"My banda is ze best in America," proudly said Pedro.

"Yes; best unhung. Well, you go down there, play for him in front of his house, and he'll be apt to give you ten dollars at least."

"Ten dolla!"

"Nothing less. But he is a little peculiar. Perhaps you may have to play three or four times before he sends out his black servant with the ten dollars, done up in tinted paper, on a perfumed salver, to you. Oh, he's very high-chone, way up!"

Of course Pedro was crazy to go to the big house and the rich gentleman at once.

They left the saloon where they had been imbibing.

Bob was still standing on the street corner, doing a handkerchief flirtation with the window beauties.

"Drop those daisies till later," whispered Jimmy.

"What's up?"

"Racket with Garibaldi."

Bob stuffed his handkerchief back into his pocket, kissed his hand to the girls, and followed Jimmy.

That exemplary cherub was walking down the street at the head of the Italian band.

"Where the deuce are you going to take those chromos of misery?" asked Bob, catching up to him.

"We're going to have a concert, Beauty."

"Where?"

"Deaf and Dumb Asylum."

"What?"

"Do you want me to put it on a poster? I say that we're going down to the deaf and dumb asylum to have a musical matinee."

Jimmy accompanied his words with a most prodigious wink, and Bob tumbled to the little game.

They soon arrived in front of the asylum.

"Here we are," said Jimmy.

"Dis a placa?" asked Pedro.

"Yea—this is the chateau. Fire away!"

Pedro looked curiously at the big sign on the gate, which read:

"DEAF AND DUMB ASYLUM."

"Whata dat?" queried he.

"The door-plate," answered Jimmy.

"What it saya?"

"Got the man's name on—Mr. Leviticus Hogsweat."

"Queera nama," commented Pedro, as he marshaled his band upon the sidewalk.

Out upon the air burst the strains of "Who, Emma," while Jimmy and Bob leaned up against the fence and listened admiringly.

The band played nobly.

Visions of the dollars floated through their heads, and they reveled in dreams of flowing lager and five-cent cigars.

Therefore "Whoa, Emma" was rendered with most remarkable variation.

The boys enjoyed it hugely.

"Ain't it nifty?" said Jimmy.

"Great," corroborated Bob.

"Immense melody."

"Immense wind, you mean. Better insure that trombone player's life, Jimmy, out of regard for his family."

"Why?"

"Because I am morally certain he will blow himself away through his instrument in a very few minutes."

Just here Emma whooped to a stand-still.

Pedro looked inquiringly about. No gentleman, or no servant was yet visible. Everything was quiet in the asylum.

"Oh, you haven't played half enough, yet!" assured Jimmy. "Sail in again."

"Then will man come out with mona?" Pedro inquired.

"Most probably. Play up lively. Don't be afraid to make a noise. Rouse mit him—sling in the fancy touches."

Pedro did not understand more than one-quarter of the oration, but he guessed at its purport.

He signaled to his band, and they burst out with "Killarney" in a style that shook the sidewalk.

"Bully," encouraged Jimmy. "That's music. Play that way in a Morgue, and it would wake up the found deads."

Pedro smiled, and encouraged his men with further exertions.

They blew as never men had blown before.

But still when they had finished the asylum was as quiet and undisturbed as ever.

Pedro looked perplexed.

"Didn't I tell you," said Jimmy, "that you would have to play three or four tunes before you got any money?"

Pedro nodded, and once more the band wrestled with "Die Wacht am Rhein."

Right in the middle of the piece the door of the asylum was seen to open.

"Here coma ze man," cried Pedro, joyfully.

Sure enough a man was seen walking rapidly down the path towards them.

PART XIV.

The brass band in front of the Deaf and Dumb Asylum was anxiously awaiting the man who was coming down the walk.

"You tinka he come wid mona?" Pedro asked Jimmy.

"No doubt about it—he's loaded with gold. That last tune fetched him," answered Jimmy.

"It would have fetched a stone man," murmured Bob, whose ears were yet ringing with the din of the band's last exertions.

The man rapidly approached.

As he got nearer he didn't look like a delighted mortal.

On the contrary, he had a general look of wanting to fight somebody about him.

He shouted inquiringly at Pedro:

"Is this band broke loose from manaic cells?" he asked.

"Whatta?" asked Pedro.

"Are you crazy?" continued the man; "just swim out with those damned old bugles."

Pedro looked as if he could not believe his ears.

"Swimma out!" he repeated.

"Yes; skedaddle, vamoze, pedestrianate!"

"Whatta for?"

"What in the deuce are you playing for here, anyhow? Why don't you go and play in a desert, or in a cemetery? It would be almost as sensible."

"Whatta you giving me?"

"A club, if you don't climb. I believe you're tight."

Pedro appeared hurt at the base insinuation.

"Me no drinka—signa pledge. No drinka 'cepta twica week. Me waita for man to coma out with mona," he returned.

"You'll wait then till you're all mummies before you get any money here," replied the man. "Don't you know, you fools, that this is a Deaf and Dumb Asylum?"

"A whatta!" fairly shrieked Pedro.

"A Deaf and Dumb Asylum. Folks that live here could sit on the roof of a powder mill and not hear when it blew up!"

Pedro grabbed the man by the arm.

"You speaka trufe?" gasped he. "No giva Italian man taffy?"

"If you tell me I lie I'll knock the whole head off you, you macaroni-chewer!" threateningly responded the man.

"Boys saya rich man live here, lova music," wailed Pedro.

"They've been giving you a grand kid. Where are they?"

Sure enough—where are they?

Not in sight.

They had taken advantage of Pedro's conversation with the man, and had faded away like Arabs.

But Pedro's troubles were not yet at an end.

The same policeman who had driven him away from the hotel appeared.

"Be gorra! will yez never take a bounce?" he asked.

Pedro laid a finger on the policeman's coat, and tried to explain things.

Here was a golden opportunity that the latter did not neglect.

"Assault an officer in the execution of his duty, will yez?" he demanded. "Come along, ye son av a hand-organ!"

Grabbing Pedro by the collar, despite the latter's resistance, he took him to jail.

Next morning he was taken before a judge who was suffering from the effects of a wine party.

The officer charged Pedro, on general principles, with being drunk and disorderly.

Naturally the judge was intensely down on liquor, and sentenced Pedro to sixty days' imprisonment as a warning to the intemperate, and then went out and had a whisky-cocktail to quench his indignation.

As for our mischievous heroes, they skipped the town—in show parlance—that night.

They went to Harrisburg, the capital of Pennsylvania, arriving there at night.

They stopped at the United States Hotel, and immediately went to bed.

Jimmy looked at his calendar before his head sought the pillow.

"Darned if to-day ain't the last day of March!" he said.

"Yes," answered Bob, "we've been on the road just six weeks!"

"It seems six years!" said Jimmy.

Hasn't the month been awful warm, almost like June? Remember, cull, they actually had a sort of a picnic on Easter."

"Guess the old cull that I asked for a light remembers it," laughed Jimmy. "Wonder did he get to the picnic at all?"

"Consult a clairvoyant," suggested Bob. "Good night, sister!" and "good night, brother!" replied Jimmy, as he remembered the circus with Riley, the constable.

Bob got up bright and early the next morning, leaving Jimmy fast asleep.

He scurried about the city for half an hour, and returned with a smiling face. But he didn't go up to see Jimmy.

That lad slept like a top. Presently a rap at his door disturbed him.

"Come in!" he shouted.

The door was shaken violently.

"D'yer want a bloke ter bust in der hull business?" asked a rough voice. "It's locked."

"Some of Bob's funny work," declared Jimmy, as he got up. "That prize idiot has actually gone to work and locked the door on the outside, and pitched the key back through the fan-light. I'll murder him some day."

It was as he surmised.

The key lay upon the floor.

"Anything to make me get up and do a quarter mile in my bare feet," groaned Jimmy, unlocking the door.

A stranger was visible.

A stout, short, box-built man, pock-marked and broken-nosed, who appeared to be guiltless of neck.

In his hands were two pairs of boxing gloves.

"Dis Jimmy Grimes?" he asked.

"Yes."

"Well, den, I'm O'Leary's Mouse."

The neckless man appeared to think that this announcement conveyed all the information necessary, and slouched down on a chair.

"Get inter yer duds," he said, "for I hain't got a year ter lose here. I've got ter go around der corner ter kill a bloody Dutchman for sassing my best gal."

Jimmy couldn't have been more surprised if his bureau had suddenly got up and indulged in a quadrille.

"What do you want?" he at last succeeded in saying.

"Do I look as if I wanted ter play croquet or do a trapeze act?" responded the Mouse, with intense sarcasm. "Don't be fresh, young feller—if yer going ter box—box!"

"But I don't want to box," answered Jimmy.

"Than what in blank blank blank, double sun-blank blazes did you send for me for?"

"I didn't."

The Mouse looked pugilistic.

"See here, my bloomin' mountain grouse," he responded, "don't ye take me for a hay-seed from a hay-mow. Do you see that ere hand?"

Jimmy acknowledged that he did. It was about the dimensions of a canal boat, and a person didn't have to go around the corner to see it.

"Der's blood on that hand," assured the Mouse; "it was de property of a kid jess like you; he got sassy—I had ter do it. His Sunday School class got a holiday ter turn out and help carry him to his grave. Do yer savey? No gum-games wid dis peanut!"

"But I tell you I didn't send for you. I don't want to box; I want to go to sleep," Jimmy answered.

"Yer can't come out. Five cases."

"Five what?"

"Half an X. Give me five dollars."

"What for?"

"Boxing lessons. No reduction, 'cept to clergymen. Have ter ring in wid der perfesh. Den yer git a way-up blessing when yer chuck in yer chips, an' go ter playin' a harp."

"But I haven't taken any boxing lessons," persisted Jimmy.

The Mouse placed himself against the door.

He put on a glove.

Then he scientifically tapped Jimmy on the forehead with a force that sent the boy sprawling on the floor.

"Dere's der first lesson," he said. "Now, jest ye turn over the gold, or I'll smash the stuffin' out of this ere boodour. Do you hear?"

Jimmy did.

Plainly the man meant what he said.

Half-dazed, Jimmy took out five dollars from his pants pocket and handed it over.

"Thanks," said the Mouse. "Bust me through if it ain't a rum go, anyhow. I don't tumble to it at all."

"Who sent you here?" asked Jimmy, the idea suddenly occurring to him.

"A young feller," was the Mouse's answer.

"About my size?"

"Kerect."

"I see it," exclaimed Jimmy. "It's some of Bob's humorous work."

"Don't care a cuss whose work it is!" chuckled the Mouse, as he backed out. "I'm a fireman. I say, young blossom, if yer wants any slugging done I'm open for dates;" and he gracefully vanished, gloves and all, downstairs.

Jimmy dressed in a hurry.

Bob was sitting down stairs in the reading room, smoking a cigar with a look of angelic innocence.

"Got up for all week?" he asked, as he beheld Jimmy coming into the room.

"See here, Bob," began Jimmy, "fun is fun."

"Nobody ever insinuated that it was beans," replied Bob.

"No joking. You've gone a little too far with a joke this morning."

"How was he dressed?"

"Who?"

"The joke. I don't remember going with him at all."

"You're getting so intensely comic that you ought to get your face blackened and play nigger in a Punch and Judy show," sharply said Jimmy.

"What did you mean by sending O'Leary's Mouse up to my room?"

"I didn't send O'Leary's Mouse—it was Geogeghan's Buffalo," soberly responded Bob.

"Be still. You sent a regular tough that wanted to box me."

"One in a box. Touch the spring and the monkey jumps up. Stick with every one," nonchalantly answered Bob, who was in a guying humor.

Jimmy was beginning to get his dander up.

"I've a good mind to punch your head," threatened he. "It cost me five dollars!"

"What did?"

"O'Leary's Mouse. If I hadn't paid him, he'd kicked my room into a cocked hat."

Rob laughed quietly.

"Don't get mad, baby gumdrops," he said. "Remember this is April 'Fools Day.'"

Jimmy got deliberately up, and bumped his head against the wall.

"Will somebody fire a load of coal at me, or club me, or knock me down and jump on me? Bob, send a waiter for the most developed mule you can find. I want a boss kicking. To think that I never thought that to-day was the first of April!"

"You confess to being sold?" Bob inquired.

"Hang it, yes!"

"Do you want revenge?"

"Revenge—revenge—revenge!" grinned Jimmy, theatrically; "give me ber-lud, or—"

"Beer," practically concluded Bob. "We'll get a square on the rest of the world."

Jimmy greeted this idea warmly.

It did not take Jimmy long to think up any amount of sells—most of them rather old, to be sure, but still capable of affording lots of sport.

First he borrowed a big copper cent. Heating it red hot, he carried it on a shovel and placed it on the sidewalk in front of the hotel.

Of course, in front of every hotel there is generally a crowd of bummers, men about town, local sports and idlers.

They cheered Jimmy loudly when they saw the cent put down, for they tumbled to the proposed racket right away.

Taking good positions, the gang awaited developments.

In a minute a pompous-looking man turned the corner.

He was dressed in a stiff black suit, wore a stiff white necktie, sported a stiff tall hat, and walked with the easy grace of a board.

Evidently he was one of those men who almost imagine that they could borrow the sun for a cooking stove if they really wanted it.

He marched solemnly forward with the step of a man who was only staying in the world to give folks a notion of a good head angel.

He saw the cent.

Maybe he thought that with that cent he might start an orphan asylum or help buy an ulster for some tropical savage.

He stooped to pick it up.
With the easy gesture of an automaton he stooped to pick it up.
His fingers just touched it.
In a second he was hopping about on one leg with his mouth full of fingers.

"This is a blazing outrage!" he shouted.
"Borrow a fire engine and put it out!" remarked Jimmy, who was bracing up a pillar in the hotel entrance.
"Young man, you are on the road to the devil!" snapped the stiff gentleman as he took his fingers out and blew on to them.

"Jeremiah, blow the fire,
Puff—puff—puff,"

sang Bob, ejecting a cloud of tobacco smoke from his mouth.

"You're a—a young reprobate!" assured the stiff man, as he shook his fingers.

"Oh, take the cent; finding is keeping," laughed Jimmy.

"D—n the cent!" howled the stiff man, plainly forgetting all of his religious teachings, as he walked rapidly away, pursued by the jeers of the group.

The next victim was a dandy.

He was got up—oh, so like a regular birdie!

He only seemed to need wings and a sweet little tail to fly away.

He had on a nobby coat, and a red—red necktie, wore a little cent hat, carried a cane, and walked in libelous imitation of a crippled snipe.

He beheld the cent.

"Blawst it, you know, to find a cent is good luck," he murmured, to himself.

It almost broke him in two, his pants fitted so tight, to stoop down, but he did.

He tried to scoop in the penny with a light and airy sweep.

It was a most successful failure.

The next instant he dropped his cane, his hat fell off, and he was practicing a sort of sixteen-hop waltz.

"Great Gawd!" he fairly cried. "My fingahs are weally wuined!"

"What's the matter?" Jimmy asked, with a sober face.

"That blawsted cent is wed-hot," answered the dandy. "Where is a dwug stoah till I buy some wags for to wap up my fingahs in?"

"There will be one along in a minute. They only run once an hour."

"What wuns?"

"Drug stores."

The dandy looked at Jimmy in amazement.

"Weally, my deah fellah, you must be cwazy," he commenced.

"Oh, Cwickety Cwops, I shall expire!"

The last sentence was caused by some extra touches that the burn was putting in.

"Well, don't die here," answered Jimmy. "If you do you'll get six months, sure."

"Weally?"

"Oh, positively. There's a nice, quiet, respectable morgue around the corner, where you can die on a marble slab with all the modern improvements."

The dandy realized that he was being made game of.

He picked up his hat and cane.

"You all are most atwociously wude!" he reproved. "I shall be scarred, you know, for life. Baw Jove! my fingahs are burning."

"Tie them up in red flannel!"

"Pick up the cent again!"

"Carry it home for a locket!"

"Lasso it!"

"Snatch it bald-headed with a pitchfork."

"Pick it up with your feet, Gussie!"

"Whistle and see it come!"

Thus shouted the gang as the dandy sneaked off like a wet rooster, all of his airs and graces gone, thinking only of his scorched fingers.

The next arrival was a bad man.

He wore his boots outside of his pants, had a collarless hickory shirt, sported a slouch hat and a most dejected-looking cigar stump between his yellow teeth.

His eyes dropped on the cent.

It meant the fifth of a drink. In some places in Harrisburg you can buy a genuine Pennsylvania, knock-me-stiff whisky for five cents a glass.

He swooped onto that cent like a negro on an unprotected chicken-coop.

The cent had slightly cooled off.

Yet it was hot enough still to cause its dropping by anybody.

He didn't hold it over an hour.

He pitched it down a plaguey sight quicker than he had picked it up.

But he didn't make any outcry.

There was a Chinaman standing near, with a box of the cus-

tomary Chinese cheap cigars, principally composed of potato-peeling, hay and dirt.

He was smiling the bland, oily smile characteristic of the heathen Chinese, and was enjoying the fun, "alle samee Melican man!"

The tough nut, without a word, stalked over and hit the Chinese a rap in the mouth which shook his teeth together, and sent the cigars whirling into the street.

"What in bloody blazes are you grinning at, you yellow-skinned, moon-eyed leper?" he demanded.

"Oh, hellie!" wailed the Chinese. "Mouth bustee. Blizness allee blokee up!"

"Yer will laugh, will yer?" asked the tough man. "What did you put that cent down for?"

Plutee no cent down," answered the Chinese, woefully rubbing his mouth. "Teeth splittee!"

"I lie, do I?"

"Whatee blout?"

"You didn't put that cent down?"

"No—me innosolent."

"Like thunder! You derved heathens are ruining this country! Take that, you rice-eater!"

Whack! and the bad man's fist struck the Chinaman alongside of the ear, and the Chinaman struck the street at full length.

Satisfied with having got square on somebody, the bad man strutted off, leaving the poor Mongolian to wail and sadly pick up his stock in trade.

"What do you think of it, boys?" asked Jimmy.

"He's a thoroughbred," replied one of the gang.

"Heaven bless the Heathen Chinese!" piously ejaculated Bob.

"Why?"

If he hadn't got it we would."

"Too bad, though," said Jimmy. "Let's make up a consolation purse for the tea-store sign."

The suggestion was adopted.

Nearly four dollars was made up and presented to the product of the Flowery Kingdom.

His grief was immediately changed into smiles.

"Knockee nose flo' two dollar mlore," he said.

"You're too willing," replied Jimmy. "Bob, the penny joke is about exhausted."

So it seems, for a small boy who had been watching the proceedings chevied down upon the now cold cent, and carried it off in triumph to be transformed into taffy.

"There's one fellow that hasn't been April-fooled," said Bob.

"Yes, he has," responded Jimmy.

"How?"

"The cent's bad."

"Talk about your depravity," groaned Bob, "that takes the dust off of the mantel. What's on the programme?"

There was fun on the programme and lots of it, for Jimmy Grimes wasn't going to let the First of April pass by with only one or two jokes to his credit, and Bob was just the fellow to help him.

He played all the regulation April Fool jokes, and a lot of new ones besides, and was as sharp, smart and sassy that day as he ever had been.

His fun did not stop with the close of the day, however, but if I were to go on telling you all the jokes he played while on the road, all the scrapes he got into and all the jobs he put up, it would require a book twice as big as this one.

He went right on having fun, sometimes with Bob's help and sometimes without it, and was as much of an imp as he had always been.

The deacon continued to live on in the same old may, Wigwams was the same bad Indian, and all the rest of the gang continued to be the victims of Jimmy whenever he felt inclined to get up a racket.

Well, having come to the limit we will now dismiss our fun loving here and say a pleasant, but perhaps not long, farewell to the jolly young joker, JIMMY GRIMES.

[THE END.]

Read "GRIMES & CO.; OR, THE DEACON'S SON ON THE JUMP," by Tom Teaser, which will be the next number (62) of "Snaps."

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